

BULLETIN OF THE COMMUNIST PLATFORM

No. 2

JUN/SEPT. 1978

WORKING-CLASS HISTORY AS A LEARNING-PROCESS

THE MARXISM OF KURODA KANICHI

DEBATE ON THE NATURE OF TRADE-UNIONISM

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A STRATEGY FOR MILITANTS : DISCUSSION

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DIALECTIC AND HISTORY IN SARTRE

VLADIMIR AKIMOV AND RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN THE NINETIES

FOR A SOCIOLOGY OF REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS

A GOLDEN CAGE OF CAPITALISM

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This Bulletin is addressed to Communists in the working class movement today. Communists are those who accept the inevitability of the Communist Revolution and ground their understanding of this process in the very development of bourgeois society. The inevitability of the coming Communist Revolution is not a blind, objective process devoid of will and consciousness, but expresses what we shall call the dialectical law of the evolution of the proletariat into a class. As bourgeois society emerges from the womb of earlier forms of social economy, it brings into being a scattered mass of proletarians who by the very circumstances of this mode of production itself are compelled to unite historically into a 'party' opposed to the bourgeois enslavement of mankind. This long-drawn-out historic process, through which capitalism creates its own grave-diggers, is the making of a large and dispersed number of working classes into a unified proletariat, conscious of its goals and of the historical means appropriate to their realisation.

The making of the proletariat is not given simply in its passive experience of the sufferings imposed on it by capitalism. Nor is it the merely spontaneous and passive result of the emergence of cooperative forms of labour founded on the factory system. Rather, the class makes itself, its historical self-creation is found in and through the interaction between the material determinants of its situation and its free, conscious efforts to reappropriate the world from the possession of capital. Between these dimensions (the dimension of Work and Alienation on one side, and the dimension of Struggle on the other) there is, moreover, a necessary, internal connection.

Work shapes the consciousness of the working class as Self-consciousness, as consciousness of the fact that the world which it creates in the form of capital is a world of its own creation, that without the labour of the slave there could be no master. Alienation defines this self-consciousness as consciousness of the fact that this world which is its creation is also an alien world, a world dominated and possessed by an other, by capital, hence as 'the Unhappy Consciousness which is the Consciousness of Self as a divided nature'. (Hegel, Phenomenology) Struggle is the free active process through which the proletarians, initially in isolation, later as a combined force, seek to reappropriate the world as an objectification of their own activity and thus to make it a world that is truly human.

Human beings are by nature revolutionary. They do not simply create the world that surrounds them, they also destroy it. They do not merely produce the social relationships into which they enter at any given stage of history, they also destroy these relationships and replace them by others.

History is the free, contingent process of the becoming of mankind, of the unfolding of its revolutionary nature, or its 'historical essence'. The human subject is not born anterior to history as the force that drives it from behind - history is not a process external to the human subject. Rather, history is this very process through which a human subject is born, emerges, and is shaped through incessant modifications by the given conditions of work, alienation and struggle.

Communists are those who understand the development of modern society as the final stage of this historic process. In the working class, in its work, its struggles, in the process of its creation into an active, historical subject, they see only a symbol of working, enslaved, alienated and struggling humanity becoming conscious of itself. Proletarian class-consciousness is the final form of the self-consciousness of this sector of mankind. The proletariat is the final shape of

the Slave. Final - because only now, and finally now, are the conditions given for the real emancipation of humanity from the external domination of need, from scarcity, and from the compulsion to labour for oneself or for others.

Communists are those who, starting from this conception of the proletariat as the goal and destination of all previous class societies, seek practically to accelerate and shape its formation into an active historical subject conscious of itself as the emancipator of humanity. (cf. the substance of Akimov's critique of Iskraism) Revolutionary Communist activity in the narrow sense is activity consciously devoted to shaping the spontaneous process of formation of the class into a historical subject. It is activity whose entire principle of development lies in this fundamental process and whose specific aim is the completion of this process.

Communists are those who engage in the practical tasks implied by Revolutionary Communist activity. The emancipation of the proletariat is the task of the proletariat itself. By their revolutionary work Communists seek not to substitute for the self-emancipation of the proletariat, to 'make the revolution' on its behalf, so to speak, but to aid in the conscious efforts through which the proletariat works out its own emancipation historically.

Communists are those who seek to impart, in action, through work, a clarity of aims to the struggles of the proletariat for self-emancipation, and to impart this clarity on the basis of existing historical conditions. Thus revolutionary activity is activity of a determinate historical form, linked to determinate goals, and tied to determinate methods. The practical tasks of Communists can never be legislated a priori, they are a function of the given stage of development both of capitalism in general and of the proletariat itself as a conscious historical subject. Thus the practical tasks of communists imply a theoretical understanding both of the given stage of social relations in their entirety and of the given, evolving forms of class consciousness and class organisation.

Communists are those who shape their revolutionary work in accordance with the needs of the workers' movement at a given stage of development from the standpoint of its mission of self-emancipation. They have no ideals to peddle - the emancipation of the proletariat and of humanity is an inevitable process whose conditions are given by the dialectical law of the evolution of the proletariat into a class. They have no formulas to prescribe, for history is a living process, and historical consciousness is a living consciousness, the standpoint of a practical subject. They have no forms of struggle to glorify or privilege - for the forms of struggle are determined internally, they correspond both to the needs of the movement and to the stage of development of the proletariat itself. They have no special programmes to fight for other than those which the proletariat itself evolves in the form of its demands, its aspirations and the historical goals which it is compelled to set before itself.

As a practice, this historical consciousness is experimental consciousness, consciousness that incessantly modifies itself according to the movement of history, that evolves its knowledge historically and applies it historically. A consciousness that denies its experimental determinations and historical character is a non-consciousness - it is a form of derangement, a consciousness cut off from reality and withdrawn into itself. Such a consciousness is a replacement of effort (of freedom) by effortlessness (by passivity), of the standpoint of a practical subject, a subject who works, by the standpoint of passive contemplation (the standpoint condemned in the Theses on Feuerbach), of historical science and historical action by a dogma that stands above history. (cf. Kuroda)

Communism is not an ideology elaborated by the intellectual representatives of classes other than the proletariat, it is the proletariat's own ideology, created by itself in the struggles through which step by step it began to evolve historically into a class with definite goals. (cf. Vester's essay in this issue) In this sense the Communist Manifesto merely summarised and drew together ideas that were worked out by the proletariat itself in the decades following the French Revolution. These were decades when the ruling classes could control the class struggle by one means alone - by means of brute force, naked repression. In this nascent stage of the workers' movement, this movement preserved an explicitly revolutionary character. Increasingly it came to make a critique of the existing social relationships from the standpoint of a future that would abolish those relationships altogether. (a) In the production of wealth the intellectual representatives of the class, born from the class itself, came to see the increasing impoverishment of the great mass of mankind. (b) In the machine-based industrial mode of production they came to see not only their present destiny but their future interest - the possibility of reducing drastically the drudgery of human labour, of enormously increasing the productivity of social labour in the interests of society as a whole, and the real lever through which the scattered mass of proletarians were being forcibly concentrated into one place of work, united into a powerful force capable of striking with a combined will. (c) In the necessity for combinations the class came to an awareness of its own strength, and of this strength as the sole means by which it could struggle actively against its destiny. The Communist Manifesto only returned to these three fundamental ideas and developed them into a projection of the future course of modern society.

Yet this revolutionary phase of the proletarian movement, confronted on the employers' side with the ideology of repressive paternalism, could persist only so long as bourgeois society remained unsure of itself - so long as its movement was, like that of the proletariat itself, defined by its incipience. In the eighteen-fifties capital entered a new cycle of expansion and Marx now abandoned the Jacobin illusions still remanent in the perspective of 1848. 'We cannot deny that bourgeois society has experienced its sixteenth century', its period of birth, 'a second time... The specific task of bourgeois society is the establishment of a world market, at least in outline, and of production based upon this world market. As the world is round, this seems to have been completed by the colonisation of California and Australia and the opening up of China and Japan. The difficult question for us is this: on the Continent the revolution is imminent and will immediately assume a socialist character. Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner when you consider that in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still in the ascendant?' (Selected Correspondence p.134) If in the Communist Manifesto Marx had seen in political democracy the basic means by which the proletariat could usher in a new epoch founded on cooperative relations of production, in Capital, written after the turning point of the fifties, Marx sought to locate the course of the social revolution within the long-term movement of the bourgeois mode of production itself. Not only does capital concentrate large masses of wage workers into one place of work and make possible their combination, but the very mechanism of the capitalist process of production 'unites, organises and trains' the proletariat.

As capitalism expanded and consolidated, the prospect of its immediate supersession into cooperation receded rapidly. It was now possible for the bourgeoisie to replace its earlier strategy of repression with a strategy of conciliation and

compromise. In this process the working class, whose vanguard was increasingly represented by a labour aristocracy founded on the dominance of organic individuality within the work-process, was compelled to adapt its forms of struggle and its class goals to the existing conditions. This does not mean that it ceased to struggle against the laws of capitalist accumulation. It did not. Every struggle to increase wages, to limit the working day, to abolish child labour, collided with the tendency of capital to extort the maximum amount of surplus value out of the working class. (See the article Wage-Labour: Trade Unions and the Struggle to Determine the Value of Labour-Power) Every struggle to obtain representation in parliament, to enact legislation in defence of labour, was directly opposed to the arbitrary despotism of the individual capitalist. Above all, the struggle to establish combinations and limit competition within the class implicitly brought into question the basic principle of bourgeois society - the principle of competitive individualism. Yet this was an epoch in which the relation of wage-labour itself was not attacked. The immediate goal of the class movement was the improvement of its own conditions of work and life within bourgeois society. The abolition of the system of wage-slavery became something historically remote for the mass of the proletariat in this new epoch.

This was an epoch in which the development of bourgeois society was defined by the unresolved conflict between its own immanent laws and the struggle of the proletariat against those laws. On the one hand, the tendency of capital to convert all production into commodity production and to convert all commodity production into the production of capital found its historically concrete expression in the renewed drive to create a world economy, and produced throughout parts of the world hitherto untouched by commodity relations forms of capitalist exploitation based on the system of unorganised commodity-capitalism. On the other hand, with the rising organic composition of capital, increasing dominance of fixed capital and increasing centralisation and statification of capital, a new type of capitalist economy emerged to challenge and subordinate the old system of unorganised commodity-capitalism. This was an economy defined by the progressively more real subordination of labour to capital, and by the fact that the principle of continuity, vital to capital, now found its practical shape in assembly line operations within individual departments of the enterprise and in the technical coordination and synchronisation of all the departments into a single unified mechanism. (See Sohn-Rethel, *Economy and Class Structure of German Fascism*, 1978) The free economy of the 19th century based on unfettered regulation by the market passed over into the controlled economy of the 20th century based on the attempt to limit the competition of capitals and direct the movement of the social capital according to a conscious plan. Having adapted the aims of its movement to this transition from the old economic individualism to the planned economy, the proletariat would now gradually impose its own social priorities on the emerging form of bourgeois society. It was this 'war of manoeuvre' that expanded the social weight of the proletariat under modern capitalism, so that the very stability of bourgeois rule in the world today has come to depend fundamentally on the ability of the state as the total capitalist to allow the proletariat the proletariat to shape the development of national society as a whole.

Thus Marxists today, at the tail end of this epoch of spontaneous reformism, are faced with a difficult and paradoxical task - to reinterpret precisely the reformist period of the working class movement as a period of struggle and of learning, as a period of growing self-awareness, to see in its apparent retreat before the rule of capital its readjustment to a period of bourgeois expansion, to see in its defeats

(v)

cycles of learning, in its withdrawals an actual progress, - in short, that 'series of historic processes transforming circumstances and men' through which, Marx says, the proletariat works out its own emancipation. A proletariat subject to increasing pauperisation would be in no position today or at any time to take the initiative in reorganising the productive forces of world society, in becoming a ruling class and thus hastening the abolition of all classes. Such a proletariat, typical symbol of all the programmes of early Social Democracy, would turn not to Communism but to Christianity, as the enslaved workers of the classical world in fact did. Only those apostles in the petty bourgeoisie who see the development of the working class as a gift of the revolutionary intelligentsia can actually stand aside and view this reformist period in the history of the workers' movement, which is the real movement of the proletariat itself, as a perpetual 'corruption' of the working class. Only they can seriously reduce a whole century in the life of the working class to the sordid image of the labour bureaucrat horse-trading with the management.

How did the Communists respond to this development in which the class struggle itself no longer led to their proliferation within the working class? Two main tendencies sprang up, and as they developed, divided and subdivided the movement. One (Stalinism and Social-Democracy), recognising that the immediate goal of the class struggle could not be the abolition of capitalist society, progressively abandoned this goal altogether. The other, (all the revolutionary currents that defended the Dictatorship of the Proletariat against Stalinism and Social Democracy), unwilling to abandon the socialist revolution as an immediate goal, saw in every convulsion of a capitalism in metamorphosis its ultimate death-agony, and at times attempted to bring about the proletarian revolution even against the will of the mass of the proletariat. The one retained an organic link with the class movement, but ceased to struggle consciously for the goal of communism; the other retained communism as its conscious goal, but could not relate to a working class whose immediate goals were very different. As dominant formations, Stalinism and Social Democracy were only the most striking expression on the political surface of modern society of the blind adjustments forced on earlier generations of the Communist movement by the real tendencies of the period in which they started their work. The spontaneous reformism of the working class, its shift to the war of manoeuvre, compelled the Communist parties of most countries to postpone indefinitely a revolutionary definition of the goals of the proletarian movement. In the profoundly insightful words of Rosa Luxemburg, 'Experience shows that every time the labour movement wins new terrain', the directing organs, the leaderships of this movement, 'work it to the utmost. They transform it at the same time into a kind of bastion, which holds up advance on a wider scale.' That is, they come to play a 'conservative role'.

Today, the epoch of spontaneous reformism is drawing to a close. The new stage in the development of the proletarian movement entails a break-up of its past political traditions, both reformist and revolutionary, the emergence of a new cycle of learning through which the proletariat seeks to evolve new methods of struggle, to develop new forms of communication within its ranks and to test out new ideas regarding the immediate goals and the concrete plan of action of the movement.

If the conservatism of each stage in the historic process - the process of self-consciousness - is relative, and its revolutionary character absolute, as Engels said, then the conservatism of the conscious representatives of earlier stages of the movement is rendered absolute by this very dialectical movement. In the new period of emergence of the proletarian movement these parties become historically obsolete reactionary fetters on the conscious development of that movement. They reflect not its future aspirations but its past gains.

The Communists in the working class movement today, on the

Internally fragmented into a multiplicity of tendencies, some of which derive from those revolutionary currents which abstractly held to the goal of Communist revolution throughout the period of spontaneous reformism, others of which have been newly formed out of workers impelled by recent struggles to seek revolutionary solutions to the problems of the proletariat, they have as yet no coherent understanding of, or programme for, the struggles of the emerging epoch. As yet, then, there exists no force within the working class movement which is capable of consciously shaping it as a movement that can destroy capitalism.

It is thus imperative for Communists today to be able to anticipate the general line of development of the movement as a whole, to be able to determine the exact historical conditions under which the period of spontaneous reformism and its superstructures of Stalinism and Social Democracy is collapsing and giving way to a new epoch. The historical consciousness of this epoch as reflected in the political advances made by the movement today we call - the Platform. All truly Communist tendencies in the world today, all tendencies which, starting from the Communist principles stated earlier, consciously seek to understand the new stage of development, to grapple practically with the problems of the new cycles of struggle and learning that signify its emergence, to outline the the practical revolutionary tasks of the proletariat in this stage - are by definition tendencies of the Communist Platform.

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- (1) The BCP is an INTERNATIONAL bulletin. The fact that it starts its production in India is a pure accident. The comrades who have started the BCP will work to bring about a stage at which it will be possible for its editorship to be circulated between the different tendencies of the Communist Platform internationally.
 - (2) You are free to translate, re-translate or reproduce any material that appears in the BCP. Acknowledgements are unnecessary.
 - (3) The BCP welcomes contributions under the following special aspects:
 - (i) International class perspectives
 - (ii) Class perspectives for India or other countries
 - (iii) On the continuation and development of Marx's Capital. The theory of modern capitalist production.
 - (iv) Historical materialism and the theory of the State
 - (v) Leninism and the Leninist Party
 - (vi) Towards a theory of the modern epoch
 - (vii) Organisations of the class
 - (viii) The emancipation of women in a Communist perspective.
 - (4) The BCP would specially welcome concrete descriptions and/or analyses of the labour-process in modern, large-scale industry. The changing structure of the labour-process at successive stages of automation, changes in the structure of the working class brought about through these, and changes in the forms of class consciousness and class organisation/struggle entailed in these. Here 'concrete' means, based on direct observation or investigation.
 - (5) From the next issue (no.3) the BCP proposes to publish any serious Marxist work on India and therefore invites: (a) historically concrete analyses of the evolution of different social classes/strata in India over the last 100 years, and of the development of the capital/wage-labour relationship in its historically diverse forms; (b) concrete analyses of the position and interests of the different classes/strata in Indian capitalism today; (c) Direct descriptions of work and exploitation under Indian Capitalism, covering any branch of social production and regardless of the special form or type of wage-labour; (d) Class ideologies, class parties and class blocs under Indian capitalism; (e) The present conjuncture of class struggle in India.
 - (6) Any material you wish to have translated into English and circulated nationally/internationally through the BCP is welcome.
 - (7) The BCP will publish any interviews, recorded discussions, summarised discussions conducted with working-class militants, workers, agricultural workers, political cadre, working class women.
- (Contributions are subject only to the condition that they conform to the general principles outlined in the introduction to this issue.)

ON CREATIVE PROPOGANDA

Two important pamphlets which have appeared recently about the Swadeshi massacre has given occasion to make a constructive criticism about the nature of their form and content from the standpoint of creative propoganda.

These two pamphlets mark a decisive extension in the nature of activities of revolutionaries which corresponds to the intensified development of the new phase of the struggle of the International proletariat and a shift in the direction of propogandist activity.

Everywhere the proletariat is awakening from its slumber and through revolutionary action is transforming itself into a class for itself. Revolutionaries isolated and demoralised are gaining new vitality and energy and are overcoming their 'I'ness in contrast to 'them' and merging with the class-increasingly they are saying 'we'.

But the revolutionaries today as part of the unleashing of the creative energies of the proletariat and firmly rooted in the real movement are called upon to play an equally creative role as organic part of this movement.

Let us develop the Leninist theory of Propoganda according to which the propogandist aims at putting forward one theme, one principle through the lived experience of the proletariat. Marx also called revolutionary activity as having the aim of explaining to the class the 'meaning' of its own actions. Elsewhere in the Early Writings he wrote that the one meaning that pervades all working class creative activity and struggle is the 'need for community'.

We need a yardstick for

We wish to link up the above with the ideas expressed in our pamphlet 'theory and Practice' which shows how the experiencing of the need the realizing of the need 'for community' is 'in itself' sufficient to overthrow the entire capitalist society for it implies the emergence of totally new social relations which threaten the very fabric of present society.

We need a yardstick for creative propoganda. Here we must judge from the effects- the contribution and role played propoganda in the transition of the class as a class 'for itself'. In judging propoganda- we must examine both the ideas expressed and the emotional impact experienced by the worker reader/listener.

What are the components of a class 'for itself'? Firstly, the work of creating in imagination - a form in which the real needs which lie dormant can be awakened and having received a concrete expression. The first motive force for any creative action is the clearest possible conception in imagination of the need. Here the task is that an abstract notion of the 'need for community' has to be given a real animation animated expression in the form of imagery which can acquire a living relation to the worker. In 'Theory and Practice' we had argued that the component parts of the need - comradeship, combativity, leadership, deliberation are virtuous dispositions necessarily engendered by the creative activity of the class.

What propogandists aim at doing is taking a real life creativity of the proletariat, and through the materials of its real life experiences to construct reconstruct an image of the action which is reconstituted as the 'memory' of the class. The growth of culture concomitant to the revolutionary movement is precisely the recreation of the memory and through memory to recreate the 'need' in imagination- of active life activity- as the meaning of the memory.

Let us take the two pamphlets on Swadeshi: It is possible on the one hand to present the event in the form of a dispassionate statement of facts or else in the style of 'wailing labourites'. What distinguishes the above is the aim that the reader must experience in relation to the tragedy the maximum emotional upsurge linked up to a definite idea. The emotional sensation which the worker reader experiences is that through this he experiences and relives the events at Swadeshi- and living through this is taken to feeling himself part of the collective waging a fight for a bright future.

There are in every creative act of the class certain universal features which however are quite abstract and are just the utterance of these features do not constitute propaganda.

Let me elaborate. We present: the shrill blast of the factory siren. Workers suddenly emerge as if from nowhere and run in panic into the factory- past the harsh eyes of the timekeeper- another siren, then the workers emerge running from gates as if the devil is behind them.

What we have done is to take certain elements and create an image. What does this image mean to the worker? The siren immediately brings into each worker's mind an association of pictures and the emotions that go along with it. The siren perhaps represents for him compulsion; the timekeeper speeding- the running out- the experience of wageslavery: drudgery, the painfulness of work. A universal representation to create an image which in every worker rekindles the memory of wage slavery which each experiences in his own way. But an abstract notion like wage slavery is presented in the form of an image. An event which is happening daily has been transformed and recreated by us into an 'image'.

When the propagandist takes as his material say an incident like Swadeshi, he is recreating, reconstructing the event in the form of imagery through certain representations. All the elements of the representation have to synthesize into one image, into one meaning.

We wish to express say two ideas- a crisis in the Textile industry in particular and industry in general- the collapse of reformism - how do the pamphlets express this?

"Jaipuria took a further step and since August '75, kept wages of workers pending for 45-60 days. While the wages of workers became an additional amount of interest free capital for him, to the tune of Rs 5 lacs to Rs 6 lacs, workers were forced to live on borrowed money, with interest rates going up to 120% per annum in many cases".

"Because of a power breakdown in Kanpur, only 1000 workers were in the mill that afternoon as against a workforce of 8000". Many workers stay at home. No job. Retrenchment. Lay-off.

The worker needs their wages. The Unions throw up their hands. They are impotent.

1. A Japanese steel manufacturer has signed an agreement with an Indian mining company to buy ten millions tons of iron ore per year
2. There is a crisis in steel industry.
3. The Japanese manufacturer is also affected.
4. He is willing to buy only 8 millions tons.
5. He is sacking the Japanese workers in his own plant.
6. The Indian mining company sacks over two thousand workers.
7. The mine workers go to their union.
8. The union leaders say: 'we are helpless'; take retrenchment compensation and go'.
9. The workers say - to have no jobs is to starve. Give us jobs elsewhere - will you fight for us?
10. The union leader pleads his helplessness.
- 11, 12 & firing...

In parliament

1. An MP from Madhya Pradesh says 'Bahuguna is a murderer'
2. Bahugunaji says 'the incident was started by antisocial hooligans. All the workers wanted to peacefully take their compensation'
3. MP: Give them jobs in Bhilai.
4. Bahuguna: Not possible.
5. What about Janata's policy on employment?
6. Bahuguna (Minister of steel and Mines): We are trying to create rural employment.
7. But the workers are mine workers.

Here is a series of representations go to form an image of crisis of world capitalism and the collapse of reformism. We don't have to state this: the very sequence and series go to constitute an image. In the above chain of representations, which collectively make an image; a series of elements merge into one image whose meaning

is the idea.

We have not dealt with however another aspect- the mode of presentation to create an emotional impact.

Now what is remarkable about the Swadeshi case is the INNER TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORKERS through a sequence of stages in the movement. New feelings are brought forth into life, the force of events compel them to develop, to overgrow into other feeling- it is the process which we are trying to reproduce- the reconstituted image of the process- the propagandist pamphlet aims at bringing to birth an image in the minds of the reader, it must unfold itself as it were before the reader in the course of action.

By reproducing the process through which in real life new images are built up in the Swadeshi workers' CONSCIOUSNESS and feelings, we can draw the worker reader into the creative act. Our work- the creative reproduction of an image of a creative act which thereby becomes creative for the readers, which makes the readers want to create, and which arouses in them that intensity of inner creative excitement. The reconstituting of an image as a process unfolding itself is simultaneously the shaping and intensifying of emotions, so that the reader comes to be possessed by the emotions.

The Swadeshi incident divides itself into two phases: the September - October gharaos culminating in the October 26 gharao and the December massacre.

There are some Universal characteristics of the October gharao:

1. Mounting tension, anxiety over payment of wages, confusion, disorder brought by the breakdown of the old practices- anxious deliberation

2. a spark, a catalyst, an occasion which terminates anxious expectation, provokes

3. a leap into the unknown.

this leap takes the form of an outburst; what emerges- comradeship, solidarity, order, planning, combativity.

These characteristic features of the new phase of the workers' movement has to be projected as they unfold through the myriad new forms of organisation and struggle in such a way as they emphasize and sharply delineate these features.

What are the merits of the pamphlet: 'Massacre of Swadeshi workers, Kanpur'?

We have 1. the Swadeshi incident; the contrast between October and December.

2. extension of 1 into the elaboration of numerous such incidents taking place all over the country and encompassing the agricultural workers.

3. the link with the railway worker's strike and linking up to the early 70s.

Both 2&3 are the reproduction of the essential features of Swadeshi on a national scale.. one two many Swadeshis.. which removes contingency from 1.

But there is another extension--in October and December we have the revolutionary workers, the reformist union leaders and the coalition of reaction: the premediation, the unifying into a single will of combined reaction which constitutes the transition point between October and December.

The reaction to December: the reformist leaders and reaction. Then the reproduction of this reaction in Parliament. The national parties of reform and the national parties of reaction. The reproduction of single cell at Kanpur achieves a qualitative extension in the sphere of 'national politics.' The transition point is also brilliant. Reaction of the local leaders to the massacre- reaction of the national leaders to the massacre; the nature of the various political parties; the class character of the local leaders to the class character of the national parties.

There is but one message: A new revolutionary phase of the workers' movement in town and countryside- the crystallization of a national reaction in opposition to the revolutionary phase- but... the isolated and sporadic nature of the workers' movement- the need for class

unity, the need for centralizing the movement under a unified revolutionary will.

Propaganda reconstitutes the memory of the Swadeshi incident, raises it to universality, kindles the dormant needs of the working class as a whole and constitutes an essential moment in the constitution of a revolutionary will- the catalyst in the inner transformation of the working class.

What we are presenting is the constant qualitative changes which are taking place through action: from chaos- discipline; the acceleration of rhythm, the increase in tempo, the leap, the revolutionary outburst. It is these last two that constitute the revolutionary character, the main significance, the main image which are we are trying to project. The leap and the revolutionary outburst has to be projected as the principle of revolutionary development.

What we are projecting is the self image of the worker- downtrodden, nameless, etching a miserable existence in squalor and filth, without confidence in himself, without hopes, full of without organization, without leadership, slavish -- rising up and transforming himself into a new creature- full of hope, full of confidence, full of courage, daring the impossible, a veritable power before which the combined reaction trembles, from the depths of darkness emerged out into the broad light of day, the emancipator of the whole mankind. This is the image and it's memory that we wish to transmit, the memory which will remain eternal as long as mankind survives.

It needs all the creative energies and talents of propagandists to rise to the occasion.

One of the most powerful modes of propaganda in AP is through revolutionary songs. This method is very successful in rural areas- one which we witness in the Election campaign at Sathupalli.

The form is what is of significance. The beat, the rhythm, and the tune is quite unlike that of popular film songs. It is typically tribal. It is quite a common occurrence to see two or three tribals carrying big 'dhol' (drums) and singing throughout the night to an audience of villagers. The beat corresponds to the rhythm of the life activity of tribals. Perhaps it is the sexual rhythm which is extended to manual work and even the peasant in the plains who are by many means tribals are attracted to this beat. One just had to start the song and lot of villagers would drop all work and come running. Here a form of presentation is in itself sufficient to stimulate and awaken pleasant sensations and emotions which attract them to the propagandist. Very soon they start participating in singing and soon the song is on everyone's lips. The meaning of the song through time through constant repetition and singing has a chance to penetrate the consciousness.

Another peculiarity of many of the songs (sung to the above mentioned beat) is their infinite flexibility. A certain basic structure is preserved to which any contemporary or conjunctural event content can be added depending upon the needs of the situation.

To give an example:

The unemployed knows the (dealings) of the road.

The unemployed knows the (dealings) of the road.

The road knows the

These two (dealings) are known to the chappals torn through constant wear.

The suffering of the worker is known to the peasant (toiler)

The suffering of the peasant (toiler) is known to the worker.

These two sufferings are known and the light shown by Kaloji Narayan Rao.

The dealings of the contractors are known to Vengal Rao.

The dealings of Vengal Rao are known to the contractors.

And both these dealings are known to K.N. Rao/coolies.

(contractors refer to the dominant castes Velmas or Kammias who through stage patronage manage to get contracts and swindle the coolie

s whom they hire.)

The structure of the songs is truly dialectical. We can see that here one image is produced through a triad of representations; two opposites mediated by and transformed by the mean.

PLATFORM REPRODUCTION SERIES: NO.2

THE EMERGENCE OF THE WORKING CLASS AS A LEARNING-PROCESS.

by Michael Vester (Translated extracts from
Die Entstehung des Proletariat als Lernprozess. Die
Entstehung antikapitalistischer Theorie und Praxis
in England 1792-1848 Frankfurt 1975)

This book attempts to understand the history of the first workers' movements and of the early socialist theories that were developed in England over the years 1792 to 1848 as a prolonged and collective process of learning. This was a process released by the repressive political, economic and cultural upheavals bound up with the first industrial revolution and with the great political revolution in France. In confronting these pressures the 'poor and labouring classes' of England gradually became aware of the necessity of evolving their own institutions and system of communication, of playing an independent role as historical subjects and of developing their own theory of society. An apatheticised, manipulated and fragmented lower class solidified into a class movement that aspired to found society as a whole on principles quite different from those of capitalism.

The exposition is arranged into two parts. Part 1 studies the working class as object of the agrarian/industrial revolution. New behavioural norms of asceticism and competitiveness ran up against popular values opposed to capitalism. The class learning-process was founded initially on this conflict. The views traditionally advanced by social historians remain quite unsatisfactory in terms of the assumptions they make about psychology or class sociology. My analysis thus implies a critique of such views, which I have proposed in ch.4 in the form of ten short theses which are likewise an attempted summary of Part 1 of the book. I have not gone into any detailed, specialist polemic, however.

Part 2, richer in details, describes the struggles between the landowning, industrial-capitalist and working classes. Here six periods of struggle are distinguished, and each of these interpreted as feedback-cycles between theory and practice on the following lines: the shortcomings of a given strategy of struggle are found out in practice through failures; this impels the intellectuals within the working class to work out new answers to the questions that still remain open; new strategies are then diffused through a determinate system of communication, they are codified and finally tested in practice in a new cycle of struggles. The descriptions of the culture of the lower classes, of the struggles they engaged in and of the theories that they worked out alternate in a corresponding manner. Thus a reinterpretation of 'early socialism', especially of the school of Robert Owen, becomes necessary: already before Marx and Proudhon, England would witness a well-developed critical theory of society and of human capacities, one that was opposed to authoritarianism and revolutionary in its cultural aspect. For some time this theory even gained practical influence over a broad-based political and syndicalist mass movement. The conception that prior to Marx and Chartism there existed only some small utopian groups that understood neither capitalism nor the necessity for class struggle is a pure prejudice. - The specific problems of the period of struggles extending from 1792 to 1848, and mainly the conditions that determined their success and their eventual defeat, are summarized in the introduction and conclusion to Part 2.

The workers' movement emerged initially not as an articulate 'socialist' current, but as a theoretically fluid 'anticapitalist' current. The closer historical definition of this 'anticapitalism' was, of course, precisely a result of the learning-process that would follow. Defined negatively, "anticapitalism" embraces

quite heterogeneous expressions, both practical and theoretical, of the critique of society. They are all unified by their rejection of a specific system of social and economic domination. On the other hand, they differ according to the social position of their supporters and according to the criteria along which the dominant system is interpreted, an alternative system conceived and the means for the realization of the goals posited by the latter actually developed. The development of criteria of this type, underlying a certain conception of society and of history, is not a linear movement, but a cyclical one. It proceeds as a confrontation between the system of domination and the system opposed to it and as a feedback-process between theory and practice within the anticapitalist movement.

1. Cycles of Struggle.

The first phase of the struggle for emancipation from capitalism coincided, for a period of time, with the final phases of the struggle for the emancipation of the capitalist middle class. The decades from 1750 to around 1850 saw the completion of the agrarian/industrial revolution, or the transition from an individual mode of production based on partly independent small producers to the social mode of production based on production for order and finally on wage-labour. Large-scale bourgeois property in land made its breakthrough by 1820; a mass of small farmers were thereby deprived of the very foundations of their existence, and came to form a major portion of the potential labour-power, or 'reserve army' of unemployed, for capitalism. 1787 saw the start of an industrial growth-cycle that persisted down to around 1842. Supported by a textile industry now based on steam, this was the cycle during which mechanized mass-production became established. Capitalist enterprises in industry secured the dependence of those small producers who had been pushed out of the countryside or displaced by their own competition. The 1820s formed the specific phase of this cycle of expansion during which industrial capitalism broke through as the dominant sector of the economy. Consolidated economically, the bourgeoisie could, in 1832, extort the franchise from a parliament dominated by a landowning oligarchy whose economic legislation formed till that period a fetter on capitalist development.

The workers' movement developed through the confrontation with this internally changing structure of domination. But if the bourgeoisie already controlled prepolitical instruments of power, such as disposal over economic resources, a system of communication, a social ideology, the lower classes were compelled to fight for these only now.

Part 1 investigates the point at which this confrontation starts: the contradiction between the traditional structures of need and the newly-enforced norms of behaviour. Of far greater consequence than merely quantitative changes, eg, the decline of real income, was the change brought about in social and cultural norms, or the displacement of the old 'moral economy' by the 'rational economy' of competitive capitalism. Like the economic revolution itself, the loss of independent means of subsistence, of professional or family status, of the relatively undisciplined rhythms of life and work and of the principles of solidarity underlying community, profession or family, till then immune to the destructive impact of economic calculation, was a comparatively slow process. But against the background of traditional entitlements to economic independence and community-collectivism it formed a catastrophic experience. This pattern of values, centred on independence and reciprocity, was now reactivated and transfigured into an ideal nourished on memories. A utopia aspiring to restore past conditions, it formed the first alternative conception of society to emerge within the anticapitalist movement and was already a result of incipient changes in the categories through which social processes were being perceived and evaluated. Contrasted with the fairly homogeneous character of this counter-ideology, the workers' life-

situation was defined by extreme heterogeneity. Due to the gradual nature of industrialisation, quite different forms of economic dependence coexisted for a long period: there was the formally independent small handicraftsman threatened by unfavourable market conditions, the skilled worker employed in manufacture or factory-production, the unskilled wage-labourer facing the threat of unemployment, the casual or seasonal worker, and finally the great mass of unemployed 'poor' dependent on social welfare. Divisions determined by profession, branch of production, religious or community or regional affiliation, formed a further obstacle to any overriding solidification.

Part 2 describes the confrontations through which the lower classes made an effort to overcome their mutual isolation and the purely backward-looking definition of their goals. Due to the heterogeneous character of its life-situations, the "unity of the working class" could be achieved only in a mediated form, as a coalition. The development of an alternative system of communication was closely tied in with the development of the general goals that formed the content of that system. Only an intensive, continuous and wide-spread process of communication realised in their own press, their own schools and organisations of defence and struggle made it possible for workers to articulate, exchange, test and develop further their views on an adequate scale. The right to communicate was a central objective in the conflict between the establishment and the workers' movement. Laissez-faire had a reverse side - tight controls over the freedom to correspond, to speak in public, to publish material, to meet or to form independent associations. Initially these controls were enforced with direct coercion, but later, increasingly through manipulation. Yet precisely such repression, especially the emergency measures of 1792/1819, taught the movement the necessity for a closing of its ranks.

Because of repression and the staggered nature of the industrial revolution, the workers' movement could emerge and develop only discontinuously, in cycles. These cycles occasionally ended with a defeat, the evaluation of which would then inaugurate a new and, generally, a qualitatively more advanced effort. This "evaluation" of failures was basically the task of the leading theoreticians, journalists and organisers of the movement. In the ensuing wave of struggles the strategies they proposed had to be tested in terms of seeing how acceptable and practically applicable they were. The most important contributions to the theory of the early workers' movement came from the 'working class intellectuals', a group of urban and to some extent rural craftsmen and skilled industrial workers, who relied either on their own capacities or on the interpretations proposed by theoreticians from other classes.

The struggles unfolded in six major cycles.... In the first two of these (1792-1819) the workers' movement turned chiefly against the old oligarchy, attempting to force it politically, through laws protecting labour and concessions on franchise, to cancel the structural crisis of the small producer, till then the dominant concern of the mass movement, and to restore the old values of independence and community collectivism. The oligarchy blamed the movement of opposition on the ringleaders. It failed to develop any deeper conception of its causes, and could therefore suppress it only superficially.

Over the next two cycles (1820-32) the workers' movement turned mainly against a new enemy, a capitalism in consolidation, and made a corresponding interpretation of its aspirations for independence and reciprocity. Accepting the industrial mode of production in an emphatic sense, it strove to overcome bourgeois relations of production through cooperative structures of decision-making. Yet even now a part of the movement continued to articulate an opposition to capital oriented to the past, and the great majority participated in the struggles of the middle class for franchise, promoting the latter to victory and pushing themselves eventually into disillusionment. Through these

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experiences working-class consciousness emerged in a more complete shape: workers realized that they could secure a lasting improvement in their position only through mutual solidarity and through their self-activity against the upper classes. In their new awareness of economic questions workers came around to accepting the principle of efficiency of bourgeois economy, without accepting the bourgeois form of property. In place of the earlier 'moral economy' there now emerged the vision of an economy of abundance based on cooperation.

The last two cycles of struggle (1832-48) were a time of trial for the class-consciousness gained in earlier phases. Over 1832/34 a trade-union movement with syndicalist tendencies attempted to improve its position through direct economic action and partly to win cooperative control over the means of production. Defeated by lock-outs, the movement then attempted to realize its socialist aims indirectly, through the Chartist franchise-agitation. Even at this stage the means of struggle accessible to it economically, politically and ideologically were not sufficiently developed to enable the class to constitute itself as the nation.

From the 1840s on capitalism entered a new period of stability, founded on a further long cycle of expansion and more appropriate forms of political regulation. This lasted several decades so that capitalism could withstand even greater upheavals and reestablish a state of equilibrium through self-controls. On the other hand, the workers' movement lost its revolutionary will and concentrated singlemindedly on strengthening its economic organisations for wage-struggles.

The new balance of class-forces crystallized by 1848 at latest and compelled Engels and Marx to review and develop further the basic outlines of their conception of the revolution. Whereas in the Communist Manifesto political democracy still appeared as the means to the inauguration of cooperative relationships, through an abridged development of productive forces aided by State intervention - Capital investigated the possibilities, inherent in the laws of development of capitalism, of a more protracted development across capitalism itself. The conception of the Manifesto is to be seen strictly in connection with the specific phase of the movement; it cannot simply be assumed to be valid for social systems at other stages of development.

The first period of development of the workers' movement thus coincided with the first major cycle of growth of a capitalism based on machinery. In both these developments the 1820s formed a turning-point: the bourgeoisie gained the political means with which it could realize its social aims; the working class gained a historical perception of its own goals and started the effort to realize them by the appropriate means.

2. Cycles of Learning.

The emergence of the working-class' theory of society has to be seen in strict relation to its practice. A purely intellectual history cannot account for the specific changes that it went through. Theory in the formal sense arose generally as a response to the practical failures of earlier interpretations of reality, and as a new form of interpretation it had to be intellectually codifiable and practically testable by specific social groups. In this way there arose between the writer and his public, or the masses and their speakers, a relation of tension which repeatedly necessitated a process of adaptation and revision. Each of the six cycles of struggle may therefore be interpreted as a cycle of learning.

1. The Jacobin franchise movement of the 1790s was aroused by Thomas Paine's interpretation of the French Revolution. Paine articulated the urban artisans' striving for political democracy conceived as a means of restoring smallscale property behind State protection. The

radical artisans threw up their own speakers, journalists, pamphleteers and system-builders who mediated between the public on the one hand and the general process of clarifying problems in theory on the other. As Jacobinism gained influence over urban wage-workers and domestic-industrial workers and as its influence penetrated the same social strata in the countryside, formerly isolated from the artisans' movement, its associations were destroyed and together with the trade-unions formally banned. Nevertheless, counter-revolutionary persecution could not stop the Jacobin skilled workers from gaining an important weight in the trade-union struggles of 1800/14. In the struggles for legal protection against labour-saving machinery, the workers reactivated their pre-industrial conceptions of independence and reciprocity, while the Jacobin propaganda for freedom, equality and brotherhood gave them a political character, in the shape of a programme for democracy. The laissez-faire policies of the regime exposed the futility of any campaign for protectionism and forced open the road to self-help. Its basic form, the organised breaking of machinery, failed at the gates of the large factories which were better defended militarily. This in turn gave rise to the need for a strategy of struggle that factory-workers could deploy and for a more effective political movement.

2. Both of these encountered their period of trial over the years 1815/19. Following the suppression of machine-breaking and the postwar crisis, workers confined themselves initially to political forms of struggle and became the newly-found public of middle class parliamentary reformers: the cleavage between townbased artisans and rural industrial workers was partly overcome. Due to the laws regulating association, the mass assembly was at first the most important form of communication. Yet in such assemblies both ideas and actions were capable of only a low degree of articulation due to their predominantly emotional mechanisms of reaching agreement and to the demagogic tendencies of the speakers at them. A more rational system of communication arose with the rapid growth of the democratic mass press of the workers. Journalists like Cobbett could carry through the process by which a yearning for independence had already started to be transformed into a programme for political democracy, and they could mediate the sense of collective experience of workers throughout the country. On the other hand, the social programme still remained arrested at the level of an opposition to capitalism looking to the past. In 1818 there sprang up a more widespread trade-union movement and a more rational style of mass demonstrations. The sense of unease drove the government to reply back in 1819 with a murderous attack on about 80,000 peaceful demonstrators in Manchester and with new repressive legislation that put a temporary halt to political agitations and the workers' press.

3. The years 1820/25 formed a period of working off the earlier experiences of failure. Both in theory and in practice the movement reoriented to the economic level; tendencies of opposition to capital dominated over those directed against absolutism. Two theories of opposition to capitalism were proposed: an individualist theory that sought to restore the society of smallscale producers and a cooperativist theory that accepted the industrial mode of production and wanted to make it the foundation of a society of abundance through control vested in the cooperatives. Both these theories reached out into the recently founded workers' schools, the first one, which corresponded to the position of the handicraftsman, through Thomas Hodgskin, the second, which found a response among wage-labourers, through William Thompson. In both of them class-antagonism was a fundamental aspect, but both saw in peaceful direct actions by the producers an adequate basis for overcoming class-conflict. Owen's theory was the most significant theoretical achievement of the time, and Thompson made it acceptable in the ranks of the working class by rejecting Owen's requirement that workers cooperate with capitalists. Over 1822/24 the trade unions entered a phase of consolidation, against the background of general prosperity, and achieved legal recognition on their more consolidated basis.

4. With legality and a militant, class-based Owenism the path was now open for the decisive upsurge of the workers' movement over 1826/32- there emerged a widespread Owenite cooperativist movement: small producers whose markets were threatened and wage-workers aspiring for better conditions of life founded cooperative stores and, to some extent, cooperative workshops. From the defeats of isolated wage-struggles there developed, under Owenite leadership, a tendency in the direction of trade-union associations cutting across professions and geographical areas, and in this way a basis for securing strike-funds. Even more significant was the renovated franchise movement of 1830, which ended, however, by bringing the bourgeoisie to parliament two years later. This defeat shattered all remnants of any sympathy for the 'middle classes'. Due to their growing economic, political and propaganda organisations workers established solidarity on a national scale. Working class consciousness, now realised on that scale, found its specific expression in a unifying ideology based on Owenism and accepted by almost all groups. Of course, the practical expression of this advance had still to come.

5. The syndicalist mass-movement of 1832/34 was the first practical attempt made at testing this more sharply outlined class-consciousness. Broad-based trade-union combines emerged, and their strike-policy was aimed partly at a cooperative take-over of the means of production. In common with the cooperatives, they broke up in 1834, defeated by lock-outs and State repression. The defeat of this revolutionary syndicalism forced the masses to return to political forms of struggle.

6. The Chartist franchise movement of 34/48 inspired an even larger mass of workers, but at the cost of a lower level of organization and consciousness. It aimed at a workers' parliament that could provide a decisive solution to social problems. Mechanisms of agreement based on mass appeal and theories of revolution rooted in ideas of "natural law" and of Jacobinism came back into prominence. The faction defending 'physical attacks' appealed to the masses to struggle for the franchise by violent means, following repeated rejections of their petitions in parliament; but this faction found little support in the ranks of the working class. Obviously workers realised that without preparation they were no match for the military apparatus of a consolidated State machine. The eventual defeat of Chartism ushered in decades of an economically circumscribed reformist practice during which the workers' organisations no longer risked confrontations with the bourgeois system as a whole.

As for the relation of theory and practice in the English workers' movement in its formative period, tentatively the following basic patterns are discernible:-

a) The movement found its point of origin in the process by which the agrarian/industrial revolution enforced a destruction of the existing social classes. This process was subjected to interpretation in terms of criteria associated with an inherited, pre-industrial mode of behaviour. b) These interpretative criteria were articulated and, through feedback with practical experience, further developed by a special group with a vanguard character, distinguished by its skills and its cultural urbanity, and composed of urban handicraftsmen, and, later, of skilled workers drawn from the industrial areas. (After 1820 the position of the wage-worker gradually became a more pressing problem than the crisis of craft-based small production.) c) The individual cycles of learning contained opposing orientations: agrarian versus industrial, craft individualism versus cooperativism, economic versus political, pacifist versus terrorist, apathetic versus millenarian, or theories looking to the past versus those looking to the future, and theories based on conceptions of natural law versus theories following utilitarian principles. Groups founded on individual forms of production inclined initially to utopian ideals directed towards the past; these they sought to establish by political means. Groups founded on cooperative

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In Chapter 1 (not translated here, tr.) I gave a summary description of the capitalist revolution in the rural and urban/industrial economy. There the interest centred chiefly on the form in which the capitalist order made its breakthrough. The position of the 'poor and labouring classes' was described there only insofar as the destruction of the two most important traditional structures - the village community and rural domestic industry - were a precondition of rising capitalism. In this chapter (ch.2) we have to look much more closely at the new modes of behaviour imposed on the lower classes. Such impositions are deducible from the prevailing economic system, that is, from the specific forms in which the valorisation-process of capital transforms men into the commodity labour-power. Section 1 of this chapter examines the forms of behaviour required within the labour-process in the domestic-industrial, manufacture-based and factory modes of production...

from production

(2.1) In the general process of evolution/based on individual craft enterprise to social forms of enterprise in which a division of labour prevails, the following stages of development are discernible: (a) a socialization of distribution under the putting-out system, (b) the socialization of some means of production and then of labour under manufacture, (c) finally, the socialisation of the total process, including the machine-system as a whole, under factory production. This logical sequence does not always coincide with the actual historical sequence. The debate on periodisation started by Sombart's criticisms of Marx is of no concern here. It is enough to note that all these specific forms had already evolved or were doing so in the several centuries of early capitalism, and that at the start of the industrial revolution the following heterogeneous modes of production coexisted with one another: - precapitalist forms comprising small remnants of an economy of autoconsumption and larger remnants of small handicraft commodity-production; - (early) capitalist forms comprising a ramified and well-developed putting-out system, a small, but also developed system of manufacture and a small but less developed system of factory-production. A description of their specific conditions of production would throw light on the sort of compulsions which the workers' movements based on trade-unions and on cooperatives were compelled to resist. The putting-out system provoked petition-campaigns aimed at parliament and organised machine-breaking as the forms of struggle specific to the trade-unions of domestic-industrial workers. Under manufacture, and chiefly in the textile industry and shipbuilding, there emerged trade-unions that evolved the strike-weapon. While these groups were already waging spectacular struggles as early as the 1790s, factory workers could organise significant strike-actions and campaigns for the defence of labour only after 1815, when the machine-system became more widespread. The different forms of struggle and aspirations of domestic-industrial workers, workers in manufacture and factory-workers are to some extent easier to comprehend when related to the various forms of capitalistically-socialized production examined below.

(2.1.a) The Putting-Out System. The first discernible predecessor of socialized production was this specific form of home-based industry. It formed a sort of symbiosis between the owner of money and the industrial producer, the merchant offering several handicraftsmen an advance of money or his services as a selling-agent for their products. Through the contracts based on this system the small craftsman ceded his role of seller to the merchant who thereby obtained indirect control over his production. (That in this way a new relation of domination came into being is overlooked by those writers who see in this relation only a "differentiation" of "roles".) His superior marketing position enabled the merchant soon to force a position of dependence on the domestic worker, both as a supplier of commodities and as a buyer of raw materials. ...

forms of production could form economic associations and strive for an industrial utopia for which they would have to fight through direct economic actions. On the other hand, neither of these two groups simply remained with the positions from which they started. Skilled workers in particular were quite open to the building of a more rational form of communication, of tactics aimed at being successful, and to a historically meaningful definition of class goals. They were likewise quite receptive to mediations between apparently opposed orientations. It follows that the individual cycles of learning should be interpreted not as meaningless oscillations between opposed extremes, but as a gradual, meaningful and productive process of acquiring knowledge. d) However, the entire process of evolution from the 1790s into the 1840s is not, even if we abstract from its internal cyclical swings, something defined merely by continuity and advance. Through the defeat of revolutionary syndicalism and of the Chartist franchise movement precisely a regressive learning-process began, and it gripped an even larger mass of workers. Depoliticisation and bureaucratisation of the trade-unions and the abandonment of any political definition of class goals were processes that defined the English workers' movement for decades after 1848. They had already emerged prior to 1848 as the retrograde moments of a period dominated by its basically progressive tendencies. e) As a rule, a given cycle of learning passed through the following stages: initially discontent with the conditions prevailing and the need for relief; a selection reception of strategies for relief; a comparatively direct use of such strategies against the dominant system; an emphatic growth following the first experiences of failure; a retrogression into apathy following repeated failures; a renewed feeling of need for more effective means of relief or even for a more realistic definition of class goals. f) Communication was established through specific types of persons, symbols and systems of communication. The mediation between theory and practice was personified in the functions of publicists, journalists, educational experts, mass speakers and preachers of various popular denominations. The symbols of identification at work were - rituals and slogans, martyrs and idols, allegorical modes of interpretation, such as anecdotes, comparisons, caricatures and satires, independent institutions, and books that were kept as classics even in the homes of illiterate families. Agreement tended to be reached in primary publics, eg, factories, local clubs, reading-rooms, formal educational events, demonstrations, in struggles or in more formal media that surpassed the given locality, such as the workers' press and workers' associations. Because it was made extremely difficult to build a formal system of communication, for the great mass of workers learning-processes followed directly from their practical experiences and only for a much smaller, even if expanding, group of workers, from theoretical study as well.

As Marx shows, down to the final breakthrough of a mechanized mode of production after 1825, the movement of opposition to capital was to a large extent shaped by the forms of dependence experienced in domestic industry (Capital I, pp. 595 ff. Fowkes). The entrepreneur encircled the domestic worker in various ways - through controls over the quality of his product and over prices, through clauses prohibiting work for other capitalists in the trade, and through various other restrictions like the truck-system, according to which the worker was compelled to spend the greater portion of his or her wages on purchasing means of subsistence from the capitalist's own store, despite their inflated prices and adulterated quality. Because handicraftsmen progressively lost their independence but remained formally independent, the relation of exploitation was specially obvious to them and drove them, quite early on, to associate together in unions. But the isolated nature of their mode of production severely limited the effectiveness of economic means of struggle in their case. Whereas employees in larger enterprises could develop the strike-weapon, the outworker reacted chiefly with political campaigns for protection or franchise and by a policy of selective machine-breaking. Their goals mainly resembled those of the urban small handicraftsmen. They supported the Jacobin franchise-movement as a means of politically restoring the stability and independence of smallscale production. Thus they were far more sympathetic to the individualist critique of capitalism proposed by Hodgskin than to the cooperativist critique developed by Owen. Hodgskin's demand for the elimination of the capitalist middleman between producer and consumer, who appropriated a surplus-product for himself, corresponded to their day-to-day experiences. But side-by-side with such individualistic notions rooted in their isolated mode of production, the outworkers also entertained notions of solidarity that corresponded to the social and cultural values of their type of community. Thus later it was possible for them to join the great movement of unification based on the ideas of Owen.

The putting-out system appears to have provided arguments both to bourgeois economists and to the opponents of capitalism. Under it the capitalist's "advances" and the workers' "surplus product" both acquired independent form. The capitalist could argue that without the investment-credit which he supplied the worker would not be able to carry on production. The worker could reply that he gave over a larger product than he actually received by way of payment.

(2.1.b) Manufacture. ...According to Marx, the mode of production based on manufacture was distinguished from labour organised in the guild-system initially only in terms of the number of those employed by the given capital, or in terms of the size of the workshop. Its first revolutionary achievement was a more efficient exploitation of a part of the means of production. At first work-effort changed only in terms of the emergence of socially-average norms regulating the expenditure of time or quality-standards, and of emulation between workers, both of these the result of their new spatial proximity. According to Sombart, this form of manufacture, based on simple cooperation and capable of hardly any specialisation, was rarely found.

The specific result of manufacture was a form of cooperation based on the division of labour. The common workshop not only made possible an improved individual exploitation of human and material forces of production, but brought into being a new, social, form of productive force, the 'collective worker who combined numerous individual labours'. The distribution of the different operations under different hands and their combined cooperation as a single collective force, or 'mass force', was more productive than the simple sum of all individual labour-powers. Cooperation reduced both the labour-time necessary for the production of a given commodity and the 'false costs' intrinsic to a system based on the spatial separation of individual processes. The social productive force of labour thus appeared as the productive power of capital, because historically it presupposed the concentration in the hands of a single capitalist of a certain minimum quantity of means of production.

Marx argues that originally the capitalists also contributed directly to cooperation by taking on the 'indispensable functions of directing, superintending and adjusting' to 'secure the harmonious cooperation of the activities of individuals and perform the general functions' (Cap.1, p.448 f.). However, this function was defined specifically by the fact that it aimed not merely at cooperation, but also at its profitable exploitation, that it was not simply a factor of harmony but 'despotic in form' (p.450). It could only be established with the help of a quasi-military organisation of 'direct and continuous control' directed against the workers whose resistance grew with their numbers. Thus it created new false costs and became in this sense itself a hindrance to the optimum productivity which a cooperative, ie, non-antagonistic, form might otherwise have achieved. A further instrument of domination, the individual work-contract, which precluded payments to the combined productive force of workers, likewise corresponded to an ideology that saw in co-operation 'a productive power inherent in capital' (p.451)....

In the form of cooperation based on the division of labour there developed two specific types - organic and heterogeneous manufacture. In the latter each worker produced a different part for later assembly; presence in the same workshop was accidental, but it economised on time and space.

The principle of co-operation was fully realised only in organic manufacture. Here the same product goes through a sequence of phases where it is worked on simultaneously by a chain of different specialised workers. Marx stresses that "this direct mutual interdependence of the different pieces of work and therefore of the workers compels each one of them to spend on his work no more than the necessary time. This creates a continuity, a uniformity, regularity and order and even an intensity of labour quite different from that found in independent handicraft or even in simple co-operation" (Cap.1, p.464 f.). Norms regulating working-time and the relative size of the different groups of workers concerned with different special functions were determinable in definite ratios; the absence of any one special function would paralyze the total process, whose perfection required the one-sided specialisation of particular operations, an extreme specialisation affecting both workers and their individual work-tools. The economies in time and quality made possible by functionally-specialised individual labour were bought, however, at the cost of the psychological torment implied in monotony, pressure on time and life-long annexation to a specific function. "A certain crippling of the mental and physical powers of man is itself inseparable from the division of labour in the whole length and breath of society". A further consequence was the establishment of a hierarchy of labour-powers and of wages, which allowed the introduction of unskilled and therefore cheap labour-powers, eg, of women and children. This process of the devaluation of labour-power and the higher valorisation of capital remained restricted, however, within the narrow technical limits of manufacture. For individual craft-skill remained the foundation of manufacture, essential to its difficult detail operations and often presupposing a training of several years. The limited exchangeability of skilled labour and its concentration under a single roof facilitated resistance to the process of enforcing capitalist discipline.

Workers in manufacture could therefore, in contrast to small independent craftsmen or to outworkers, evolve specifically non-political forms of struggle and of consciousness such as the strike. They distinguished themselves from unskilled workers by the special pride they showed in their professional skills, by their aspirations for education and their sober and respectable style of behaviour...

(2.1.c) The Factory System. Only this system, under which the functions of the collective worker in manufacture were progressively installed in automatic machinery, made possible the general devaluation and transferability of labour-powers. Marx defines machinery under three 'parts' (cf. Cap.1 p.494ff.). The starting-point is the tool or working-machine which takes over the functions and tools of a large number of workers. Its perfection required the invention of a strong and operationally-controllable motor-mechanism not dependent on local, natural motive forces: the automatic steam-engine. Both the working-machine and the motor-mechanism then required mediation through a transmitting mechanism. Over time the motor-mechanism and working-machine were rendered totally independent of human strength, they became automata.

The evolution of the mechanized factory is similar to that of the manufacturing workshop. Initially several machines of one type were linked to the same motive mechanism in simple cooperation. Soon the machine-system proper developed; in this the specific, individual specialised machines work on the same product according to a sequence. As in organic manufacture, so here the individual units stand in a fixed numerical proportion to one another and keep each other employed. On the other hand, whereas in manufacture the special processes were isolated by the division of labour (Cap.1 p.502), here their continuity reaches perfection; there arises a unified automatic system based on the progressive reduction of labour to a 'mere appendage'. (Marx did not anticipate the mechanized stage of heterogeneous manufacture, whose principle is assembly-line work.)

The mental powers of production which formerly were a property of the individual craft-worker, were already in manufacture "required only for the workshop as a whole..What the individual worker lost, capital concentrated within itself over against him or her..as an alien property and dominating power". It was the machine-system that accomplished the dissociation of these scientific powers from the worker in the form of independent powers of production: "The capitalist who puts a machine to work does not need to understand it..But the science realised in the machine takes on for the workers the appearance-form of capital" (Results of the Immediate Process, p.1055, trs. modified). Science perfects machinery to the extent that its price lies below the price of the labour-power that it replaces. This creates false costs insofar as in a capitalist society the price of labour-power is pushed below its value and machinery is introduced 'too late'.

The devaluation of the labour-power of the male heads of family was soon accelerated by the fact that women and children could also compete in the labour-market as additional reserves of labour-power without skill or any special strength. They did so in ever-greater numbers. The concomitant physical and psychological misery, illness, early mortality and intellectual desolation frequently shattered the resistance from male workers that was still possible under manufacture. Further, the material and moral depreciation of machinery compelled a lengthening of the working-day and, especially after the 12-hour-day legislation of 1833, applying then only to young workers, an intensification of work-effort through a speeding-up of work and an extension in the range of operations. The constant transfer of functions performed by human labour-power to machines "destroys the technical foundation on which the division of labour in manufacture was based. Hence, in place of the hierarchy of specialized workers that characterises manufacture, there appears in the automatic factory a tendency to equalise and reduce to an identical level every kind of work that has to be done by the minders of the machines. In place of the artificially produced distinctions between the specialized workers, it is natural differences of age and sex that predominate" (Cap.1, p.545)...

(2.2) The industrial revolution transformed the worker's position on the labour-market in three respects: in terms of the number of jobs, the requisite level of skills and the necessary level of work-effort. Given the introduction of labour-saving machinery, full employment presupposed a simultaneous extension of markets. The deskilling of labour expanded the supply of labour-power by its incorporation of female and child labour, and the resulting competition among workers made possible drastic extensions in working-time as well as wage-cuts. Finally, machinery revolutionised the mode of production itself: its full utilisation presupposed detail work, prolonged hours of work and a rapid and exact rhythm of work.

Thus labour-power had to be adapted to the needs of capital in terms of its quantity, its quality and its specific costs. The naturally-determined level of population had to be sufficient to ensure continual shifting of labour-power from declining branches of production to expanding ones. These persons then had to be subordinated in a psychological sense to an externally conditioned rhythm of work and, in terms of the quality of their labour-power, to the type of technology employed. And economically, they had to become used to arduous work-norms and low wages...

(2.2.b) Work-ethics and labour-skills. To be in a position to valorize a given supply of labour-power the capitalist must first engage the worker's attention in factory-work. Workers have to be broken into the punctual, regular and painstaking execution of specialised jobs, before the capitalist can secure his capital against losses due to interruptions and wastage. On the other hand, the traditional work-ethic bore no traces either of an accounting mentality or of a sense of enterprise; the rhythm of work associated with it was elastic and irregular. Excessively prolonged hours of labour alternated with frequent breaks: 'Saint Mondays' or even 'Saint Tuesdays', the numerous holidays and half-day off Saturdays, as well as the periodic interruptions due to seasonal fluctuations, or to shortages of raw materials or to glutted markets. Sombart refers to an "impulsive" and "irrational" adherence to the pre-capitalist principle according to which one worked only in order to subsist or to enjoy oneself: work-effort declined in proportion to the satisfaction of needs, and any additional effort would be squandered on festivities or the consumption of liquor. People took the trouble to expend only so much labour-time "as was necessary to make a normal level of subsistence possible" (Sombart). Moreover, because the new machinery did not belong to them, they wasted or pilfered materials and neglected or destroyed the machinery itself, so that in 1769 the first legislation forbidding the destruction of machinery was passed. Entrepreneurs took a series of measures, one after the other, to convert workers employed earlier on the land, in domestic service, in the army or in the poor-houses - often in utterly hopeless and wretched conditions - into disciplined detail-workers. Starting in the 14th c. the State evolved a number of repressive methods: regulation of work-contracts and of wages, workhouses and compulsory labour, and the suppression of workers' coalitions. By the 18th c. these measures were already largely ineffective. Now the policy of low wages flourished. But under this policy work-effort could be increased only extensively, in its actual duration. Initially the attempt to increase the intensity of labour through incentives turned out to be a failure: piece-workers would cease to work at the point which they regarded as sufficient to enable them to recover given levels of subsistence. Moreover, the introduction of draconian factory-ordinances made a purely external impact. It became necessary to inculcate a sense of duty into workers. The role of Protestant religion in this process is debatable. The worker's transition from modes of behaviour specific to the earlier 'moral economy' to those characteristic of the economy of enterprise was accomplished chiefly, as Sombart himself concedes, through the permanent external compulsions of the new mode of production itself and their associated threat of extinction in the event of resistance. This question and the problem of how far such resistance can be simply dismissed as 'irrational' will be taken up in more detail in later chapters.

The new labour-processes, furthermore, required new skills. In England long-accessible craft-skills could be used. But to be able to valorise the cheaper unskilled labour-powers, complex operations were progressively transformed into simple ones through technology and the division of labour. Untrained workers were more easily transferable than trained ones. On the other hand, they were often thoroughly specialised and had to possess a general technical disposition. The simplification and decomposition of work made it possible to incorporate large sections of the population, esp. women and children, as transferable labour...

(3) The emergence of the workers' movement cannot be explained simply in terms of the decline in their real conditions of life. The decisive factor in creating discontent was the discrepancy between the material and cultural conditions that prevailed and the entitlements in terms of which they were measured. The workers' movement did not spring spontaneously from the factory-system. Cotton may have played a pioneering role in the general process of economic development, but it was not a typical one. For a long time, not the workers in textiles but the handicraftsmen and skilled workers formed the real nucleus of the workers' movement, and taken as a whole this movement relied on a multiplicity of working classes. It is wrong to suppose, as simplistic theories do, that they acquired a consciousness of being a single class through their economic degradation and levelling and merely as objects of these processes. The decisive factor was the threefold impact of expanding population, technological revolution and the counter-revolutionary suppression of Jacobinism. The traumatic social experiences that hit the 'poor and labouring classes' are discernible chiefly at four levels - when they lost their traditional forms of subsistence, labour-power became their sole foundation of existence, and this in the form of a marketable commodity. Secondly, their life-activity was forcibly subjected to harsher discipline and controls over time. Thirdly, an expanding metropolis ruined health, social relationships and prevailing ethical codes. Finally, traditional value-patterns and world-outlooks failed to secure any perspective in the new environment. Given the heterogeneous character of the real life-situations of different groups in the lower classes, a sense of unity could stem only in an indirect form - not through the passive experience of suffering, but through active resistance in struggles that verged on civil war. The farming population suffered in particular from the loss of communal land-rights over the years 1760/1820, domestic outworkers mainly from the process of concentration in the putting-out system that started around 1800, the smaller entrepreneurs in charge of manufactories from their inability to purchase steam-engines. Only a fraction of these various groups descended immediately into the ranks of the factory-proletariat. The concentrating and disciplining effects of factory-work on the one hand strengthened the social and cultural cohesion of factory-workers and on the other hand, because employer/worker relations were now defined by greater distance and anonymity, it made the process of exploitation even more transparent. Economic exploitation and its projections in the hysterical consumption-habits of the nouveau riche and employers' groups, was reinforced by political suppression. Conflict centred less on the standard of living than on the loss of a traditionally-sanctified mutual aid and individual freedom, or they were inspired, in other words, by the principles of reciprocity and independence, and expressed the transition from a social order founded on reciprocity to one founded on competition. Thus wages were of lesser importance than normative conceptions concerning traditional habits, justice, independence, security defined in terms of mutual aid or paternalist defences, and the family-based enterprise. The persistent nature of such memories is often underestimated. Even after 1830, wages often remained a purely secondary issue for workers engaged in struggle, in contrast to such questions as the truck-system, cooperation, rights of association, working-time, job-security or child-labour. ...

(3.2) Religion exerted a twofold influence on the nascent working class. The Methodist poor church encouraged the process by which the external compulsions of the industrial mode of production were interiorized; on the other hand, its left wing took over from the church its specific organisational techniques and introduced these into the oppositional movement. Whereas Methodism worked as an organising force, situations of despair especially tended to create more widespread millenarian movements, an apocalyptic and enthusiastic cult of the poor and downtrodden that sought refuge in the hope that Christ's eternal rule would soon begin.

The special feature of Methodism lay in the fact that it could respond simultaneously to the needs of industrial employers and large masses of workers alike. It was the most important of the poor churches. During the French Revolution it defended the establishment. This however was hardly calculated to bring it any recognition. During the Napoleonic wars it won a large following drawn chiefly from the new building and industrial working class. John Wesley had already ascribed little value to the structures of nonconformist self-administration. After his death Jabez Bunting, who dominated orthodox Methodism from the period of machine-breaking down to Chartism, established a bureaucratic and centralized executive clergy with which he persecuted Luddite, Jacobin and specifically religious deviations. In 1811 he forced a split in the Primitive Methodists, because he regarded their new institutions of mass assemblies and of sermons by lay people and by women as politically dangerous. At the same time, political radicalism took over methodist techniques of organisation to its own advantage. The clergy, on the other hand, promoted the psychological basis for the process of subordination and above all of a work-discipline grounded in puritanical ethical codes.

The attempt to transfer a Puritan work-ethic from the middle class to the lower classes ran into the problem that workers were allotted not the rewards of individual effort, but only collective distress. Weber and Tawney investigate chiefly the vocational and work ideology of the 16th/17th c. entrepreneur. The worker's adaptation to this is seen by them more or less as a result of market sanctions and of the ideology, grounded in utilitarian or puritanical conceptions, that poverty is the punishment meted out to the idle and undisciplined. Weber observes, without much empirical backing, that as the ideology of professional ascent the Protestant ethic prevailed over Wesley's Methodism in the ranks of the working class. Sombart argues that without a simultaneous process of interiorisation, external compulsion would have remained quite ineffective. According to him, Weber's thesis of the role of Protestant asceticism in promoting a capitalist disposition applies more to the worker than to the entrepreneur, who would have been sufficiently inspired by other motives. Like Weber, Sombart was here referring to the group of skilled workers who, supported by religious instruction, willingly increased their work-efforts from a sense of duty and to obtain higher earnings. Because, however, only a small fraction of workers received religious instruction, Sombart sees the chief basis for the acceptance of bourgeois norms in the actual compulsions of the economic system and their longterm impact.

E.P. Thompson uses the example of Methodism to distinguish between these hypotheses and modify them in two respects. (His arguments are equally valid for Sombart, whom he passes over without mention.) In the first place, against Sombart and Weber it should be noted that the ascetic ideology of social ascent is of no importance for workers who were in no position to improve either their skills or their incomes. Secondly, material necessity did not act as a stimulus to adaptation, as the low-wages theory of the entrepreneur supposed. Because the traditional culture lacked any coercive pressures in the direction of an alienated work-ethic, external compulsion tended to provoke rebellion. Resistance

was inflamed less by declining standards of living than by the destruction, under the pressures of factory forms of cooperation, of largely self-determined rhythms of work and effort in both town and countryside, and of the close integration between home and work-place. Methodism accomplished the cultural shift to obedience postulated by utilitarians like Andrew Ure. Instead of social ascent it sanctified poverty, and prosperity was a fortune it transposed to a future after life. To the extent that it broke with the intellectual traditions of the older Dissenter currents and elaborated a special theory of grace for the poor, it came closer to Lutherism. In a formal sense the theory of the universal nature of sinfulness and grace possessed an egalitarian character because it put rich and poor on the same level. But the thesis of the uncertain nature of grace played an authoritarian role. Grace was attainable only for the period of repentance, so that the faithful were required to be continuously active in church affairs. Moreover, you could not buy grace from God through human accomplishments, and worldly possessions were supposed only to lead to temptation; social improvement was not in any sense a meaningful goal. Fear of losing grace became the compelling basis of a specifically "Methodist" mode of life, a commitment to church activity, individual training and a disciplined life-style that included one's attitude to work. Poverty and work became signs of grace. This continuous repression and channelising of emotional and mental energies was compensated by the emotional orgasm implied in serving God. The repression of sexuality was a recurrent motif in the activities and symbols connected with worship. The mortification of a spontaneity that had still been possible in the old culture started with the education of children and its supporting principle of punishment. As one's form of life became defined by a submissiveness rooted in fear and anguish, Christianity became transformed from a religion of love into a religion of death centred on the crucifixion and on the affirmation of suffering.

For the period from 1790 to 1830, Thompson argues, the conversion of a large number of workers to Methodism might be explained in terms of three conditions specifically, (a) direct indoctrination, (b) the still important traditional sense of community-life, and (c) the psychological impact of the counterrevolution. The Methodist clergy continued to practice a system of education designed to lead children from their innate sinfulness to penitence by thrashing into them ideas of cleanliness, abstinence and submission. Wesley warned, "Break his (the child's) will and his soul will come to life". The Sunday schools continued these irrational principles. Except for bible-reading, reading and writing were no part of their programme. In practice much of this was modified by the fact that individual parishes often perpetuated the old community-norms, or renovated them, and provided help and consolation to people in an environment rooted in the destruction of traditional norms of reciprocity. Furthermore, religion compensated for the despair that stemmed from political repression by allowing moods of enthusiasm or tragedy to find expression in rhetoric and sometimes in mass-hysteria and panic. The millennialism of the downtrodden masses, directed initially to the heavenly abode, could also be a source of revolutionary inspiration, as in the 1790s.

This aspect evolved into a religion of the poor that stood out in sharp contrast to the Methodist church and its revengeful God. In the years 1801/1814 Joanna Southcott emerged as the greatest prophet of this millenarian tendency, attracting tens of thousands, especially in the north and west of England. Her apocalyptic visions comprised no trace of social revolution and were sustained on a belief in the supernatural. They found a response because they corresponded to the moods and emotional instability of a period defined by its anomie, to that sense of despair to which Methodism likewise owed its own expansion over the years 1790/1830. In many cases, it seems, the expansion of mass movements of a religious nature followed directly on the defeats inflicted on political movements, and political radicalism itself might be seen

as a more secularised, or social form of millenarianism.

This internal link between secular and religious hopes of salvation was reflected not only in the oscillation between them, but in the fact that, for example, several Methodists came to play a leading role in the workers' movement. They show the ambivalent character of Methodism. They reacted against the coercive pressures of official Methodism with a libertarian antithesis: propaganda designed to discredit democracy made democracy a basic objective in their eyes. Thus Cobbett confined his criticisms to the clerical bureaucracy and exempted the local preachers and laity of Methodism. The Primitive Methodists, thoroughly proletarian and lay in their attitudes, made a direct contribution to the workers' movement in articulating the demands of the discontented population of town and countryside and attracting them to its side. The Chartists for their part appropriated the image of a revengeful God in their songs and slogans, and Chartist terrorism formed a continuation of the impulses that had animated the religious mass movements.

Hobsbawm, from whom the account given above borrows as much as it takes from Thompson, is mainly interested in refuting Halevy's position that Methodism prevented a revolution in England. He bases his arguments on the numerous Methodist centres which, or supporters who, were at the same time politically radical, and thus arrives, like Thompson, at the position that commitment to Methodism and commitment to political radicalism sprang from the same social sources and were in no sense mutually exclusive. He adduces the further argument that in terms of actual numbers the Methodists were not sufficiently large to have formed an obstacle to revolution. In 1811, out of 10 million persons in England and Wales there were around 150,000 followers of this denomination, and in 1851, in a population of some 18 millions, only 500,000. Hobsbawm traces the absence of a revolution to the fact that while conditions of social distress and mass discontent certainly prevailed, there was no serious crisis in the ruling classes and no well-organised, unified, experienced and ideologically solid workers' movement - or none sufficient for a revolution. These conditions form the subject-matter of Part 2 of my book. Here we may, for the moment, draw out two results of the studies made by Hobsbawm and Thompson: (i) that religion does not necessarily play a counterrevolutionary role, and (ii) that the acceptance of a religious creed presupposes social and cultural needs that have already come into being. All this apart from the fact that those who accept the religion in that very process transform its official doctrines according to their own needs. ...

As the work of Thompson and Hobsbawm suggests, it is possible to suppose that this religious backing on the one hand of the millenarian upheaval and on the other of clandestine organisational activity (with its contrasting positions on the use of force) exerted a positive impact on the supporters of the early workers' movement in imparting a certain stability to their motivations. However, because a backing is not the motivation itself, a further question remains. We have to explore not only the social crisis or the social and cultural pattern of values, but also the character-structures of the participants. Certainly it was no accident that the position of 'moral force' should have been represented by the Chartist faction composed of London-based artisan intellectuals, and that of 'physical force' by industrial workers of agrarian origin. As Lovett's autobiography shows so clearly, the former were characterized by taboos on disorderly, epicurean, impulsive and violent behaviour, by a certain timidity that went with a scrupulous sense of fairness, by a capacity to see things through organisationally, by a readiness to make personal sacrifices, by pedantic affectations linked to a sense of tactical realism and by a rejection of authoritarian personality cult and forms of communication resting on mass appeal. The other type stemmed from an agrarian milieu in which precapitalist values were strong, and they set greater store by physical force, festivities, irregularity, suffering and a sense of inspiration. Both contributed to the development of the workers' movement, but in their reified and fixated forms both were obstacles to further development. ...

VLADIMIR AKIMOV, "PETERSBURG"

(Extracts from Akimov's A Short History of the Social-Democratic Movement in Russia, 1904/5)

1

One day in the early 1890s I was in the Caucasus, riding down a narrow mountain path along the coast. Around me rose giant oaks, cedars, and cypresses, covering the mountain slopes with trackless forest. My friend met me near his country home. He was taking in logs brought to him from across the sea in feluccas.

'Do you mean to say', I asked him, 'that, living in this virgin forest, you still need timber brought in?' 'But of course', my Caucasian friend replied. 'These logs were brought a hundred versts from here. If I wished to take them from my own forest, they would be very expensive. It is too difficult and takes too long to break a path through these thickly overgrown mountain sides.'

It occurred to me that this was indeed similar to the conditions under which we were labouring to 'build' our Social Democratic movement in Petersburg. We knew that the only force capable of realizing our ideals was the proletariat. We lived in a city where more than 100,000 proletarians lived and worked. And yet what incredible difficulties we had to overcome merely to meet with workers, to talk to them, make friends with them, tell them about our ideals, and inspire them to join us in the struggle for the common cause!

Wishing to establish contact with workers, one of my friends began to frequent daily a dirty little tavern in an outlying workers' district. He would sit there for hours, scanning the faces of the visitors, striking up acquaintances with workers, trying to become a familiar tavern habitue and thus enter into their circle of interests and gain acceptance as an insider. Another comrade spent many summer nights in the fields outside the city, where he met many unemployed - hungry and weary men who never suspected that the chance companion of their poor shelter in abandoned brick sheds was a student and a socialist propagandist. Such were our ways of meetings with workers.

The first Social Democratic group in Petersburg was formed in 1885. In January the first issue of the 'newspaper of the Russian Social Democrats' Rabochii (Worker) appeared. The second issue appeared in July of the same year, including, among other material, articles by Plekhanov and Aksel'rod. Although it adopted Social Democratic principles, however, the circle was unable to effect an immediate change in the tactics of the Russian socialists, and, to a considerable extent, it retained the old propaganda methods. Its tactics were not those of the new proletarian socialism then just emerging but rather those of the preceding period in Russian socialist history, that of the Narodnaya Volia at its peak. And this is precisely why these tactics seem to us today to have been more varied and multifaceted than the subsequent steps of the Russian Social Democrats.

The Rabochii group conducted propaganda among cadets and soldiers, attempted to establish contacts with peasants, advocated terror, and regarded the workers merely as the most revolutionary material with which to work. It was therefore quite willing to transfer its workers' circles to propagandists of the Narodnaya Volia. The Social Democratic movement still had to re-examine all the theoretical postulates of socialism, to 're-evaluate all values', before it could create its own tactics and find its own way to solve the problems facing the socialists of the 1880s. It is only today that the question of propaganda among the troops and the peasantry has presented itself to the Social Democrats, and that the opportunity for such work has become a reality; it is only now that it has become essential to use arms in the struggle. But at that time the attempt to implement such plans was simply a survival from the past.

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The Social Democrats recognized the necessity to ground their political viewpoint on firm foundations, and so they devoted most of their energies to study and to debates with socialists of the old school....The students became more and more involved in debates about socialist theory. Meeting in secret, like conspirators, young students - men and women - argued sharply and passionately all through the night about the significance of the economic factor in history, the destiny of the peasant commune, the role of the peasantry and the proletariat. Chirikov's story The Invalids (1903) reflected some of the nervous mood created by these debates in the ranks of Russian revolutionaries...

The Rabochii group was arrested on 27 Jan. 1886. Their press on Ropshchenskaia Street was also seized. (In the appendix to Thun, Kol'tsov reports the following about Petersburg: "In 1884 it was already possible to organize a Social Democratic group, which immediately began its activities. By 1885 this group had worked out its programme and launched into practical work - propaganda of our Social Democratic views among workers and the intelligentsia, primarily in student circles and even in "society". At that time the group consisted of 15 or 16 men and girl students, one engineer-architect, one journalist and two old members of Black Repartition who lived in hiding from the police".)

The Sisyphean labour of forming new circles among workers had to be begun anew. It was undertaken by a circle of students of the Technology Institute, led by Brusnev. This circle still had much in common with the Rabochii group. Although its members considered themselves Social Democrats, their methods of propaganda were essentially those of socialists who devoted themselves to cultural-educational work. The tactics of the Narodnaia Volia had already been abandoned, but Social Democratic tactics had not yet been worked out. The idea of direct warfare was given up, and preparatory work - the dissemination of ideas - was begun. Brusnev and his comrades hoped to expand their activities and established contact with many cities in Russia; in April 1892, however, they too were arrested.

The events of 1891 - the famine, followed by an epidemic of cholera - heightened social unrest in Russia. The Social Democratic theories were by no means dictated by the logic of these events. But the national disaster awakened all the vital energies of the nation and compelled people to seek one definite answer or another to the question of what was to be done. Naturally everyone began to do what he considered imperative. All opinions were aired, both those carried over from the past and those only just emerging. A battle of ideas began, and those which best met the needs of the historic moment - the Social Democratic - emerged victorious.

In 1891 a new Narodnaia Volia group was formed in Petersburg. It was headed by Mikhail Stepanovich Aleksandrov, and its excellent proclamations were written by Astyrev. The group began by reissuing the old programme of Narodnaia Volia with some slight changes which reduced its sharply terrorist orientation. It had its own press. In addition, it organized a number of propaganda circles among students and workers in Petersburg and its environs. At approximately the same time the Partiia Narodnogo Prava (People's Rights Party) was formed. This party felt that all the controversial questions of Russian revolutionary thought should take second place and should yield to the 'most urgent problem of our time' - the overthrow of the autocracy. In order to solve this problem all the revolutionaries, regardless of their particular allegiances, should unite. This group was headed by the old socialist Mark Andreievich Notansen. It organized a press in Smolensk. Both these groups sustained heavy losses during the arrests of April 1894.

The Social Democrats also continued their work. After the arrest of Brusnev and his friends, workers' circles were once again organized by their comrades at the Technology Institute. There was a closed group, concerned purely with propaganda, and its educational circles resembled a clandestine school. The Narodvol'tsy complained that now they too had to teach the

workers' circles physics and natural history. "Of course," one of them said to me, "the workers are much more interested in hearing stories about flowers than engaging in revolutionary work. But there is nothing we can do about it. The Social Democrats have set the fashion, and we have to reckon with this if we are not to lose our influence among the workers".

Indeed, the tactics of the Social Democrats were simply to educate a number of workers who, grouped in circles, would become conscious Marxists and enjoy influence among their fellows. A worker's speech on 1 May 1891 vividly summarized this approach. Our comrade said:

"At this time the only thing we can do is devote ourselves to the education and organization of workers - a task that, I hope, we shall carry through regardless of the threats and obstacles raised by our government. In order to make our efforts bear fruit, we must do our best to educate ourselves and others intellectually and morally; we must work at this as energetically as possible, so that the people around us will regard us as intelligent, honest and courageous men, have greater trust in us, and take us as an example for themselves and others". (..It is interesting to compare these speeches with the Four Speeches by Jewish Workers delivered a year later, on 1 May 1892, in Vilna. In Petersburg the workers' speeches still reflect the period of kruzhkovshchina (closed study circles). The Vilna speeches already express readiness for economic struggle. The following words of a woman worker (Fania Reznik) are as typical of the Vilna speeches as the passage quoted above was typical of the Petersburg speeches. She said: "We must fight against our enemies. But, of course, every individual must take account of his capacities; he must not undertake what he is not able to carry out. We know very well that we cannot change everything all at once. We must therefore fight for the time being against our closest enemies, whom we encounter every day - our employers".)

Thus personal influence was at that time regarded as the only means of spreading Social Democratic ideas. The plan of action of the first Social Democrats was to gather together small groups of promising people and give them a systematic education in Social Democratic ideas. The handful of early Social Democrats was like a grain of sand among the millions of the country's population and the many hundreds of thousands of proletarians. What else could they have chosen as their symbol if not the spark (*iskra*), which glows in the dark and from which will spring the flame! Such was the psychology implanted in its best representatives in the period of study circles. And it is interesting to see this psychology preserved over the years to this day, when (although there are cadres which no longer require a spark) wide strata of the proletariat are still shrouded in darkness. It is interesting also to see how there has emerged a new type of leader for the proletarian masses, a leader with a different psychology, and how a conflict has developed between the old and the new outlook in the ranks of the Social Democratic movement.

During the period of study circles there was as yet no such conflict of viewpoints. At that time it was necessary to break a path through the undergrowth to the oaks and cedars which will go into the making of our temple. This was how we, the intelligenty, subjectively saw the situation. But the objective effect of our approach was that when the elemental mass movement sprang up of itself, a number of enlightened and educated workers were already prepared. A subjective re-evaluation of the significance of our work was, perhaps, psychologically inevitable, for its price was so very high. Long, painstaking and dangerous effort was required to obtain these first results which, although essential, were of too little immediate importance.

In distant Kolyma, a revolutionary poet poured out his sorrow because he felt that no one listened to his call, no one answered his song:

I sing in darkness, in the dead of night...
 Who hears my voice? What living soul is near?
 In vain my eyes search in the gloom! ..
 I raise my arms high..
 Who sees me? Answer!..

I sing in darkness..

We, too, heard no answering echo! What could be done to make the proletariat respond to the battle cry? From time to time the government locked up the propagandists in prison. Their pupils stubbornly and fearlessly continued their work, but they remained just as alone as their teachers. The circles did not achieve their purpose. What was the word that would fire the spirit of the proletariat and unleash the elemental power of the labour movement? It was for this we searched.

"In the summer of 1894 (I was told by Cde.Ch.), while an apprentice mechanic, I travelled as an assistant machinist on a locomotive. I became closely acquainted with several railway workers who seemed pleasant and quite intelligent men. I had long conversations with them, and waited for a convenient moment to shift our talk to political topics. A suitable occasion presented itself before long. The governor of Nizhni Novgorod, Baranov, had announced that he would order anyone flogged who spread alarming rumours among the people (about cholera, as I remember). It seemed to me that Baranov might act on his word, and I was utterly infuriated by the thought of how helpless the Russian citizen is in the face of such violent threats. I spoke about it to my new acquaintances. So long as I spoke about the Russian's lack of rights, the arbitrary rule of the authorities, they all agreed with me. But when I mentioned Baranov's threat as an example, they roared with laughter. Dumbfounded, I asked why they laughed. 'What do you think? You'll say something in a tavern, and they'll lay you out and let you have it! ..Simple enough! .. They'll let you have it! What can you do with them? They're the masters!' "

On another occasion Cde.Ia. told me about her visit to a working woman, a maker of silk stockings.

"She was still young, but ill and exhausted, with red-rimmed eyes. I began to question her about her life. The major portion of her income came from Princess San-Donato, for whom she knitted fine evening stockings. The stockings were very expensive, and every pair took a long time. Often they were needed in a hurry, and the knitter sat night after night over the fine loops of silk, ruining her eyes. But the princess wore a pair only once, and then discarded it or gave it to her maid. The contrast between poverty and wasteful luxury was striking, and I began to speak heatedly to the young woman about the injustice of social relations. But the unfortunate stocking maker suddenly exclaimed with admiration: 'Ah, if you knew how beautiful she is! How rich and graceful! And what manners she has! And what are we? Should we have stockings made for us? Why, every time I help her on with one of my stockings, I can't tear my eyes away from her pretty little feet.' "

As I have said, at that time conscious Social Democrats had contacts not with the labouring masses, but with individual workers. The Social Democrats tried to rouse some response by drawing the workers' attention to the glaring injustice of the existing order. But even the most outrageous facts did not bring the workers to protest. The propagandists were in despair over this attitude of the average worker, untouched by propaganda, toward the world around him. And the advanced workers treated him with outright contempt. A worker who delivered a magnificent speech on 1 May 1891 said to one of my friends later, when in

penal exile: 'Leaflets are a waste of time. What can you explain in a single leaflet? The worker should be given a book, not a leaflet. He must be taught. He must be drawn into a circle!'

But the workers who continued revolutionary work after 1894 were dissatisfied with the circles too. "In the winter of 1894", writes Cd. Peterburzhets (pseud. for Konstantin Takhtarev), "the work of organizing workers' circles and of educating individuals continued. But there were already signs of disappointment. Something was lacking". "Some of the conscious and advanced workers who called themselves Social Democrats were beginning to criticize closed study circles". "No, they said, the success of the cause must be sought in the labour movement. And in order to create a conscious labour movement, there must be leaders specially trained for the task. The working-class propagandist and organizer must have an exact knowledge of all the circumstances of his working life".

At the same time there was a deep, unspoken ferment among the labouring masses, a growing but still unrecognized discontent which expressed itself here and there in individual flare-ups, in scattered, unorganized protests - disorders at Semianikov's, at the Port shipyard, at Voronin's. Under these conditions the manuscript of the pamphlet On Agitation came to Petersburg from Vilna.¹

'Anyone whose activity does not further the growth of class-consciousness and revolutionary demands among the proletariat', read the pamphlet,

"cannot call himself a Social Democrat. Yet these aims can only be achieved by rousing a mass movement on the basis of material discontent; and every step in this direction will facilitate the subsequent development of the movement. The obstacles which hinder even educational work and which seem - and for the small revolutionary circles really are - insuperable will fall one by one. In view of all this, we feel that it is necessary for the Social Democratic circles to make a change in their work..., to take up constant agitation among factory workers on the basis of existing daily needs and demands. The struggle stirred up by such agitation will train the workers to defend their interests. It will give them courage, make them aware of their strength and the necessity for unity, and eventually will bring them face to face with the most vital questions.

1 On this Frankel writes in his introduction (p.18-19): "a very active group of Marxist intelligenty, who (frequently as the result of police expulsion from university cities) were in Vilna, made a bid in the years 1892/3 to break out of the small and constricting workers' circles and to infiltrate the workshops and small factories of the town. The new tactics met with startling success if only because the agitators demanded nothing less than the enforcement of an obsolete law from the reign of Catherine II which made 12 hours the maximum legal working-day. Under the cover of the law, it proved possible to encourage the workers to organise in various mutual aid societies (kassy) and to wage strikes. Made bold by the relative economic prosperity of these years and attracted by the illegal meetings and literature (which had been switched from Russian to the better understood Yiddish), the Jewish workers proved eager to organise themselves. Each trade developed its own workers' organisation which controlled the collection of funds and other day-to-day matters but which was dominated by the agitators who, in turn, met to receive instructions from the revolutionary leaders (in Vilna, such Russified Jewish intelligenty as Arkadii Kremer...). It was Kremer who in a small brochure written in 1894, On Agitation, summarized the goals of the strike movement and formulated what soon came to be known as the Vilna Programme. It was imperative, he explained, to find ways and means to win the support of the masses, for only the workers could liberate themselves. Popular 'agitation' was the only method acceptable to a true Marxist, for 'propaganda' restricted to small circles had led to the 'degeneration of the socialist cause into nothing more than a sect'.

On the basis of this class struggle, which will take on an increasingly conscious character, it will be possible to agitate for political change in favour of the working-class. The subsequent programme of the Social Democratic movement is self-evident. Anger, constant dissatisfaction, constant striving for improvements in one's position and an unceasing fight for such improvements, together with a broad understanding of victories already won - such is the goal toward which the agitator should lead the masses."

The necessary note had been struck. The period of 'economic' agitation was launched in Petersburg. And the agitators who had raised no echo when they indicted the existing political and social order found that not only the workers with whom they were in direct contact, but also the wide strata of the working-class to which they had no direct access responded uniformly and boldly to their call for 'economic' warfare. Thus we see here a repetition of the pattern of developments observed earlier in Vilna.¹

"I came to Petersburg", I was told by Cd.K., "in January 1895, soon after the publication of the first leaflet about the strike at Semiannikov's. ('A leaflet for agitation was rapidly prepared. It took the form of a slim pamphlet which described the conditions at Semiannikov's plant. Read at a meeting of several workers, it was hectographed and distributed at the factory, although not very successfully. Though as yet only tried out in an isolated incident, the new method of the Social Democrats attracted the workers' attention'. Peterburzhets.) Everybody waited with impatience and excitement to see its results. Agitation by means of leaflets was a new method, and it was difficult to foresee what the experiment would lead to."

¹ Because of its exceptional interest, it is worth quoting Akinov's analysis of this phase of transition in Vilna:-

In 1889 and 1890 the kassy (mutual aid fund associations) expanded rapidly and their meetings became more and more lively. They took broader functions upon themselves and began to assume a militant character. However, the more the kassy became imbued with the spirit of a spontaneous labour movement, the weaker became the position of the 'propagandized' workers who represented the class conscious ideologists of the proletariat. And this is understandable. While the unpropagandized workers who voiced the spontaneous ambitions of the working-class argued at the meetings in terms of the immediate interests of the masses, the propagandized workers, the spokesmen of the class conscious ideological movement of revolutionary Social Democrats, valued the kassy only as a propaganda medium. Also, under the influence of their teachers, they attributed too little importance to the kassy as a means of improving the workers' living conditions. Under such circumstances, the 'man of the masses' could not follow the propagandized worker and, ignorant of his undeclared plans, could not even understand what exactly the latter was after. Of course, their constant defeats hurt the pride of the 'propagandized' workers, and they began to demand that their teachers appear at the kassy meetings themselves to defend their views. The mild propagandist of the far-off socialist order - the diligent teacher in a workers' circle - was brought and set before the crowd. The conscious revolutionary stood before the blind forces of revolution, which could neither guess nor understand his great and remote goals. As he watched the movement emerging among the masses, which on the surface were so calm, and for the first time heard the sound of an elemental force, the conscious revolutionary, the ideologist of the proletariat, was compelled to admit that he had given the wrong advice to the 'propagandized' workers at the mass meetings. It was at this point that the words were spoken which later sped across Russia: 'We were wrong'. "The Russian Social Democratic movement is on the wrong path", declared our Jewish comrades in the pamphlet On Agitation. "It has locked itself up in educational circles. It should listen for the pulse-beat of the crowd, and, finding it, should step ahead of the crowd and lead it."... Thus the second phase of the movement came into being. ... (From the chapter called "Vilna and the Bund".)

The Experiment proved very successful. In the meantime ferment among the workers was growing. "The past month (Nov. 1895) was full of major developments in our life", we read in the proclamation of the Union of Struggle.

"Three times in one month Petersburg workers rose against oppression by the employers, three times they tried to win better living conditions by an active fight. The first to rise were the textile workers at the Thornton factory. Everybody knows how difficult life has been in recent times for textile workers, who have been ruined and pauperized as a result of the sharp drop in wages. The long simmering discontent finally flared up, and the workers rose in protest against a new wage reduction. Almost simultaneously there were disorders at the Lafern Tobacco Company. Here, too, the employers had long tried the patience of the women workers, resorting to downright swindles in order to squeeze a few more pennies from their starvation wages. Patience finally came to an end, and the women workers put fear in the hearts of the Lafern company, wrecking the factory and beating up the hated overseer. The third incident occurred at the Machine-made Shoe Factory. This wealthiest of companies, not content with legal robbery and oppression, did not hesitate to use flagrantly illegal means of exploiting its workers. Forty workers in one of the shops struck, demanding abolition of excessive penalties for defective products. . . (The proclamation evidently belongs to Dec. 1895. It is addressed to All Petersburg Workers and signed 'Union of the Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class'. This was the name of the Petersburg Social Democratic group at that time.)

'The first to rise were the textile workers at the Thornton factory'. And the Union of Struggle immediately applied its new tactics.

"After a large number of meetings over a period of several months (writes Cd. Peterburzhets), and after heated debate between spokesman of a workers' group of the Nevskii Gate district and representatives of an intelligenty group, it was decided to initiate the new tactics of mass agitation based on the daily, urgent needs of the workers of this or that factory. The plan was that printed leaflets distributed in the factories would describe the conditions in a given factory and state the workers' demands for specific changes. Leaflets summing the situation and stating the demands of the Thornton workers were scattered in the factory workshops and buildings, and produced a tremendous impression on the workers."

Along with the Union of Struggle, a group of 'youngsters' was also active in Petersburg at the time. This group grew up separately not because it differed ideologically from the older group but solely as a result of the conditions under which it had to work. The workers' circles were few, and it was not easy to increase their number. Hence even the veteran members of the first group were not all occupied. Some of them had to wait their turn. Yet there were already quite a number of Social Democratic students eager to engage in revolutionary activity. Since the 'veterans' did not provide them with such work, they sought it on their own. "In the autumn of 1894 I happened to meet a certain worker", one of the 'youngsters' told me, "and began to visit other workers with him. I attempted to organize a circle, but without success - none of the workers came more than three times to our discussions."

The efforts of the 'youngsters' bore fruit only in the summer of 1895, when the workers' circles began to turn to them in the absence of the 'veterans' away on vacation. Soon both groups, the 'old' and the 'young', met in the workers' circles. The 'veterans' always followed established rules and procedures. The 'youngsters', on the contrary, sought by purely experimental means to evolve new tactics which would permit them to become the workers' spokesmen and leaders. This was why the 'veterans' disapproved of the leaflets of the 'youngsters'.

In the summer of 1895 the 'youngsters' responded to the strike at the Port shipyard by issuing a proclamation to all Petersburg workers, which opened with the words, 'Workers! There is a strike on Galernyi Island.' It went on to develop the idea that all workers should take up collections to help the comrades at the Port, for victory on Galernyi Island would be a victory for the working-class. It pointed out that the workers had to organize in order to fight the capitalists. Describing the difficult conditions of the workers and the fact that the employers were organized, the proclamation concluded: 'We shall reply to the unions of the employers with unions of our own.' The manuscript was submitted for duplication on the mimeograph of the 'veterans', but the latter disapproved of it: 'This leaflet', they said, 'could have come from Vorwärts and is not applicable to Russian conditions. Leaflets should deal with concrete events and working-conditions, and there is still no point in speaking of unions in Russia.' Nevertheless, the youngsters printed their leaflet on a hectograph, after copying it by hand. It enjoyed great success, although only 70 copies were printed. Another leaflet, given out to the workers at the Shpalernaya factory, did speak only about local matters, but it also stated that 'our manufacturer serves as a graphic example of the capitalists' attitude toward workers'. Further, it said, 'We must begin by raising demands that can be won. We must test our strength. A strike will not bring about the golden age, but it will strengthen our sense of solidarity and unite us all the more closely for the struggle with the enemy.' This leaflet was also criticized by the 'veterans': 'You pour buckets of cold water on the hopes of the workers while calling upon them to strike.'

There were also disagreements concerning organisational questions. In Nov. 95 the youngsters organised a circle of pattern-makers. Patternmakers are the most advanced element among the workers. Besides, they all know each other and are scattered over all the mechanised factories. Hence with their aid it was possible to establish contacts with all factories. The 'veterans', however, criticized such a workers' organisation as bourgeois.

Gradually the youngsters came to accept the tactics of purely economic agitation, and their proclamations in Nov. 95 to the workers of the Putilov plant were purely economic. It now seemed possible for both groups to unite. Such a unification was prevented by the Union's mistrust of one of the 'youngsters', NN. Mikhailov, who did, in fact, turn out to be an agent provocateur.

I shall deal in greater detail with the groups of 1895 both because there is a scarcity of data on them in our literature and because this period in which economism originated and grew is quite mistakenly represented by Lenin in his book What is to be done? as diametrically opposed to economism.

Economism was marked by two characteristic features: (1) Proclamations urged war on the capitalists but said nothing of war on the government. Workers were called upon to fight employers despite the government's support of the latter; (2) Parallel with the conspiratorial organization of the revolutionaries emerged workers' organizations devoted entirely to 'economic' issues. The former feature is clearly seen in the work of both groups in 1895; the latter is just barely discernible.

About this definition Comrade T. wrote to me:

"What a strange distinction you make between a conspiratorial and a purely economic organization! What do you mean by a workers' organisation which is purely economic and, by implication, non-conspiratorial? I would say that there has never been any such organisation. Some of us wanted to substitute for the central organisation of the Union, which was composed solely of intelligenty, an organisation composed solely of workers. But I insist that in practice we had neither a purely conspiratorial organisation of the Union nor a purely economic one conducted openly by the workers. The workers' organisations have been forced by the political conditions under which we live to be secret and therefore conspiratorial; moreover, they did not deal with 'economics'

alone, for in most cases the money of the workers' kassy was spent both on political literature and to aid comrades arrested for political reasons."

It is true that at this time no such distinction was made, and it appeared as if there was a struggle between the workers and the intelligenty for a place in the Union. But such an explanation of the intraparty struggle in 1895 is as superficial as Ca. Lenin's interpretation of the present fight as a fight for places in the Central Committee and the central journal. If people fight for places, it is not because, or at any rate not only because, they would like to possess them. The contestants assume that they will conduct the work differently when they are at the helm. Underlying the conflict of individuals we must see the conflict of principles. This is the first point. Second, although the workers' kassy and the Union of Struggle were both clandestine, it is nevertheless essential to distinguish the one from the other, for each had its own goals and its own methods. The kassy had a single objective - industrial warfare. They helped comrades who had suffered in this war, and bought forbidden books for propaganda in this war. From the government's point of view, all these were political crimes, and indeed these activities were of great significance for the cause of political freedom and socialism. But the participants in the kassy were unaware of this significance, although some of them sensed it vaguely. On the whole, they regarded their secret organisations merely as weapons in the economic struggle of the working-class. This was how their proclamations explained their fight. (See 'What is a socialist?': 'Socialists are those who strive for the liberation of the oppressed from the yoke of the capitalist bosses'. See also Lenin's 'To the Tsarist Government', which contains this line: 'To be a socialist is to support the workers in their struggle against capital.' Comrade Trotsky says in his Our Political Tasks that 'while the theoreticians and publicists of "Economism" have ruthlessly cut away the socialist banner, the group of Zaria and Iskra is utterly innocent of this sin against the holy spirit'. Comrade Trotsky merely forgot to add that 'the theoreticians and publicists of "Economism" and the members of 'the group of Zaria and Iskra' are one and the same people at different stages of their development. He probably forgot this because he himself is one of these people, the author of the ultra-economic report from Nikolaev on the one hand and an Iskra contributor on the other.)

The Union of Struggle had its own, broader goal, and it saw the workers' economic struggle merely as a means. In creating and supporting the workers' kassy, the Union had in mind not their direct results but their role in developing the proletariat's class war. But the Union did not state its goal - the overthrow of the existing order - either in leaflets or at the meetings of the kassy. This lent the Union of Struggle the character of a conspiratorial organisation which sought to base itself on the labouring masses. (See Lenin, What is to be done? 'Today the Russian revolutionary, basing himself on the spontaneously awakening class, can at last - at last! - draw himself up to his full height and unfold his whole epic strength.' See also his One Step Forward 'A Jacobin, indissolubly linked to the organisation of the proletariat - such is the revolutionary Social Democrat.') And this distinguished the Union from the organisations of the masses, the kassy.

This growing complexity in the revolutionary organisations, this crystallization of Social Democratic groups, was not only a typical aspect of the economist stage but was also the factor that determined its second characteristic - the fact that the leaflets said nothing about politics.

Comrade Plekhanov and later Comrade Lenin held that economism originated in 1897. The Union of Struggle of 1895 is taken by Lenin as a model from which the Economists should learn. Yet it was just the activity of the Union of Struggle in 1895 which laid the foundations of economism. However, the year 1897, as we shall see later, saw the end of the economist stage.

In Schippel's pamphlet Trade-Unions, Gd.Kol'tsov makes the following comment on p.ix, 'for readers of the twenty-first century': "During the summer of 1901 A.D., the term 'Economist' (in quotation marks) was given not to those who engaged in the study of economic science but to those who asserted that the workers should eschew all except economic aims." This comment distorts historical truth for the sake of polemics. In Russia there were never any Social Democrats who denied that the political struggle was essential. Even the most extreme organ of so-called Economism Rabochia Mysl', never rejected the political struggle of the working-class as a matter of principle. References are usually made to the famous 'Credo'. The author of the 'Credo' was an extreme politician, who maintained that the working-class was not capable of overthrowing the autocracy and therefore urged the socialists to look elsewhere, to look to the intelligentsia, for support in its struggle against the autocracy. However, this 'Credo', for which only two individuals were responsible, met with no response from any Social Democratic group. Besides, it was not merely that the 'Credo' did not advocate Economist theories. It was actually antithetical to the ideas of the Economists, who urged that Social Democrats devote themselves wholly and exclusively to the cause of labour, and who felt that the proletarian struggle was all-important.

(Since Iskra has completely distorted the historical appraisal of the 'Credo', it might be useful to sum up its history at this point. Several private individuals (I believe there were four of them) met accidentally at the editorial office of a Petersburg magazine. In conversation, a certain N. (Kuskova) expressed the ideas which I cited above. The others present felt that the ideas were erroneous, but asked the speaker to formulate them in writing which she did. One of our party comrades (Lenin) who saw the manuscript gave it the impressive name of 'Credo' and sent it to his acquaintances. Seventeen of these met and sharply criticised this 'Credo', then sent their criticism to the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad for publication. The author of the 'Credo' never belonged to any Social Democratic organisation active in Russia. She is a former member of Narodnoe Pravo...she had no connexion with the young Union and was not even present at the congress at which this Union was founded. Consequently, only prejudiced critics of 'Economism' could hold it responsible for the Credo. / For Lenin's version, see What is to be done? Selected Works, Vol.1, p.112. Disregard for historical fact is carried so far that the Russian editors of Selected Works refer to the Credo, in their 'clarificatory' notes (p.817, op cit.) as 'a manifesto of the Economists', and then go on to lie quite openly about the 'Economists'. We are told, for example, that 'they limited the tasks of the working class to an economic struggle... asserting that the political struggle was the business of the liberal bourgeois.' BCP /)

If, however, the term 'economist' is to be applied to Social Democrats who believed, for tactical reasons, that for a period of time the political tasks of the proletariat should not be mentioned in leaflets, then the first economists, and indeed the only real economists, were none other than the members of the Union of Struggle of 1895 - the subsequent founders of Iskra and sharp critics of Economism.

And though the future members of the Iskra group were themselves at that time the theoreticians and practitioners of economism, the Group for the Emancipation of Labour, which considered their activities unsatisfactory, did not venture to point out their errors in the press. On the contrary, it publicly approved them. In the conclusion to the pamphlet The Tenth Anniversary of the Morozov Strike, V.I.Zasulich wrote:

"The Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was founded in the autumn of 1895, and by winter the labour question already confronted the government in all its force. By early summer of 1896 the whole world was speaking about the Russian workers' movement. But what did this Union of Struggle do in the beginning? It took down from the words of the workers all the details of the employers' malpractices, all their malicious tricks and deceptions in connexion with the accounts, deductions, spoilage, stretching the work-day beyond all limits, and so on. All this information was printed in leaflets which were distributed among the workers, urging them to defend themselves against such malpractices."

Thus Zasulich saw that the Union of Struggle confined itself to merely economic agitation. However, in its report to the London Congress of the International in 1896 the Russian delegation stated that 'the Union of Struggle missed no opportunity to discredit the Tsarist government in the eyes of the worker'. As I shall show with quotations from its leaflets, this was not so, and the writers of the report embellished the facts. This was a lapse on their part, but it proves that they, too, were dissatisfied with the facts. Yet they did not say this openly, evidently 'out of diplomatic considerations'.

I shall demonstrate later that Rabochaya Mysl' followed a path broader than that taken by the Union of Struggle in 1895. For the moment I shall merely say that none of the leaflets of the Union of Struggle in 1895 dealt with political issues.

A leaflet to the Thornton workers, issued on 10 November, says nothing about the government or even about the 'authorities'. /This leaflet was written by Lenin./ Another leaflet of Nov. 95 'To All Petersburg Workers', speaks about 'the authorities, in the person of the factory inspector', and discusses the action of the 'government', which sent a battalion of soldiers to the Thornton factory. 'General von Wahl permitted himself to abuse the women workers.' A leaflet distributed at the Lebedev factory says that 'the government' helped the employers keep the workers in subjection. These leaflets were issued by the 'veterans'. In a leaflet distributed by the 'youngsters' at the Machine-made Shoe Factory, we read that 'the government is hand-in-glove with the bosses'. These are all the political allusions to be found in the proclamations of the period. But neither the 'veterans' nor the 'youngsters' pointed out that the workers would, at any rate in the future, have to fight against the government too. In response to the arrests of 8 and 9 December, the Union of Struggle issued a leaflet expressing a clearly economist position...

Of great interest, too, is another leaflet issued by the Union of Struggle. According to this custom followed by both groups at that time, it is undated. If I am not mistaken, it was written by a worker and issued on 1 Jan. 1896. Its title is 'What is a Socialist and a Political Criminal?' It might be thought that such a leaflet could hardly fail to take a political stand, and yet it is typically 'economic'. 'We are robbed by our employer', it states, 'whose side is taken by the government. The socialists are people who strive for the liberation of the oppressed from the yoke of the capitalist bosses. And they are branded political criminals because they go against the aims of our barbarous government, which defends the interests of the factory owners'. 'Fight the employers despite the fact that they are helped by the government - such is the slogan of economism!'

In order to prove that the Union's activity was political in character, Lenin in What is to be done? cites the headings of the articles in the first number of the Union of Struggle's journal for 1895, which was never published. 'Some future Russian Historical Journal may unearth the manuscript of this journal in thirty years from the archives of the Police Department', he adds. Indeed, until then the character of these articles cannot be properly judged; the titles say nothing about the content,

for the Union of Struggle of 1895 found it necessary to explain even such terms as 'socialist' and 'political criminal' without pointing out the political tasks of the Russian proletariat. The fact remains, at any rate, that in the publications which the Union managed to issue, it did not touch upon the political tasks of the working-class.

On the night of 8-9 December, members of both groups were arrested. The arrests continued throughout December, January 1896 and part of February. The Union of Struggle suffered most severely, since many of its members were arrested at the very beginning. The arrests of the 'youngsters' were spread over a longer period, and those whose arrests came later had managed to turn over the work to new recruits. Therefore, after Jan. 96 the revolutionary work fell mostly upon the shoulders of the 'youngsters' who had contacts at the Aleksandrovsk plant, Pal's, Semiannikov's, the Warsaw (Line) workshop, the Volynkovskii factory, Koenig's, the All-Russian Rubber Plant, the Machine-made Shoe Factory, the Putilov plant, at Bert's on the Priazhka River, the Baltic and Port shipyards, and at the Shpalevnaia factory. In short, the 'youngsters' had far more contact with workers than did the Union. So the Union made an effort to reach an agreement. The problem was discussed by two delegates from each group. The Union argued that the leaflets of the 'youngsters' were weak and demanded that their publication be placed in its hands, especially since it commanded adequate technical facilities for this work. The 'youngsters' refused. For their part, they demanded that in the event of an agreement the organisation should be given a new name. This demand was rejected by the Union, which insisted that its name was already well known and popular. No agreement was reached at that time.

Two months later the force of events compelled all Social Democrats active in Petersburg to work together, to unite. And in the autumn they came forward as a single organisation, adopting the name of the Union of Struggle. In addition to these two groups, there were still others active in 1896: a very influential group, which had originated among the workers of the Nevskii plant, and an organisation formed in connexion with a Sunday school. Both these organisations also joined the Union of Struggle.

I shall not describe the events of the summer of 1896 and Jan. 1897. They are briefly but adequately described by Peterburzhets. They revealed a highly skilful application of the tactical and organisational principles which had already crystallized in 1895. I shall merely note that the rejoinder of the Union to the letter circulated by the Minister of Finance, Witte, on 15 June 1895, was devoted to purely economic matters. Nevertheless, the Union had just issued an appeal to 'society' which was political in character, which explained the political importance of the workers' battle, and which invited 'society' to help in this battle. Later, in November, the Union received a proclamation written by Lenin in prison, 'To the Tsarist Government'. It was published, and is a remarkably interesting document. It speaks in great detail and very critically about the government, proving that the government always takes the side of the capitalists against the workers. But it fails to discuss political tasks, and certainly does not mention the overthrow of the government. Moreover, it does not even say that the workers have to, or will have to, fight against the government too. On the contrary, the author describes the role played by the economic struggle and shows that for the workers to take part is itself to fight against the government - 'as the government itself has shown by taking action against the workers. And this is what the socialists have stated in their leaflets.' From the leaflets referred to by the author of this proclamation it may also be seen that the socialists did not call upon the workers to fight against the government. They merely pointed out that the support provided the employers by the government was an obstacle to labour in its industrial war. All this was stated also in Rabochaiu Mysl', but more was said, as I shall show later.

As may be seen from the above, what in my view was the first characteristic of this stage of economism - the fact that leaflets confined themselves to the fight for labour's economic interests - was a remarkably constant feature of the Social Democratic publications from 1895 to 1897. Let us now examine the second feature of this stage - the emergence of labour organisations devoted to the economic needs of the workers. In Petersburg, as in the western area, the workers' organisations (created by the organisation of revolutionaries) took up only a part of what the Social Democrats had to do. Consequently, side by side with, but independent of, the workers' organisations, the revolutionaries had to have their own conspiratorial organisation.

The emergence of workers' organisations prompted Peterburzhets to describe the entire period 1896-7 as 'the period of organisation'. But the workers' attempts of 1896 to create an organisation were only the first steps. From documents published by Peterburzhets we see that the dreams of the 'organisers' were confined to Petersburg and to industrial warfare. This was exactly what had happened in the western area during the analogous period of the movement's development there.

The workers' organisational demands were highly characteristic of this stage in the movement. The workers did not demand that they be given full control of the work of the Social Democratic organisation, as they did in Petersburg in 1901 and elsewhere at the corresponding stage of development. On the contrary, they knew of the existence of a central organisation of revolutionaries and yet willingly left the central functions to this organisation. They felt, however, that the organisations in immediate control of economic warfare should be built according to democratic principles.

"The Union itself", writes Peterburzhets,

"debated whether or not to admit workers to the central organisation. The debates on the improvement of the Union's organisational work and on the admission of workers to active participation culminated in the decision, late in Feb. 97, to admit two workers to the central group of the Union. They were to represent the agitators' group or, as this group was still called, the Workers Committee. But before the central group of the Union in its reconstructed form could hold a general meeting, a wave of arrests in March 97 carried off all those who advocated worker participation in the inner organisation of the Union. After that, everything returned to the old pattern. The Union was temporarily weakened; worker participation in its central group became impossible for the time being, and was achieved only at a later date." ...

3

The lull that came in the summer of 1897 was, of course, only superficial. Below the surface men continued stubbornly to think out plans for the new period of the Social Democratic movement in Petersburg. In this new phase the labour movement itself raised demands for civil rights and began to require democratic procedures within its own organisation. However, the formal leadership of the Union, weakened by repeated arrests, consisted not of the comrades who had led the struggle of 1896 and early 1897 but of the 'veterans' members of the Union of Struggle of 1895. At that time they had themselves chosen the path of economic agitation; but now the proletarian movement, which they had formerly tried to unleash, forced them to adopt slogans which they were bound to find unsatisfactory. The 'veterans' refused to reckon with the new demands of the labour movement. The new tasks and problems, therefore, inevitably called forth new organisations. Several small groups appeared, which began to work independently; they justified themselves with the argument that participation in the Union only made work more difficult. The Union lost almost all its contacts among the workers.

The Petersburg movement had expanded in breadth and depth so rapidly that the various elements affected by propaganda were bound to take different paths. In order to work with the broad strata of the proletariat which had only just been drawn into the movement, it was essential to agitate on the basis of daily economic interests. This was done with great success by Rabochaia Mysl', whose sole aim was to reflect the thinking of wide strata of workers. But to the smaller section of the proletariat which for many years had been well trained in the school of active war, more ambitious aims presented themselves. Their needs also had to be met, and this was undertaken by the group of Rabochee Znamia (Workers' Banner).

If the Union of Struggle had been strong enough and had understood its tasks in the autumn of 1897, it 'would have taken into account the different levels attained by the various strata of the proletariat'. But there was no complete unity in the Union of Struggle, even among the 'youngsters'. It was unable to concentrate in its hands the work at all levels. Thus the two strata at each extreme of the working-class found the right spokesman for their own needs.

This, however, did not mean the emergence of an 'economic trend'. On the contrary, as I shall show, it meant that the proletarian movement which hitherto had been homogeneous was now putting out more comprehensive sociopolitical branches. The break between one phase of the movement and the next may be set at the arrests of 21 March 1897, and I shall now try to sketch the subsequent organizational developments.

As early as the summer of that year we saw the formation of the workers' group Rabochaia Mysl'. In October it published the first issue of its newspaper. In the autumn, too, the Group of Technology Students was formed by people who had left the Union. This group, which later took the name Rabochee Znamia, established contact with the Group of Revolutionary Workers, which, centred in Belostok, was opposed to the Bund. It was about this time that the Group of Revolutionary Workers issued the pamphlet, The Tasks of a Workers Party, and published the story The Spy. The spring of 1898 saw the publication of The Battle Cry, a reprint from R. Znamia no. 1. In June the journal itself appeared. Both the Rabochaia Mysl' and the Rabochee Znamia groups tried to join forces with the Petersburg Union, but their attempts failed because the 'veteran' members of the Union did not understand the new organisational problems and refused to tolerate the views expressed by Rab. Mysl' on the one hand and Rab. Znamia on the other. Nevertheless, also at loggerheads with these 'veterans' were quite a number of newer members within the Union, who soon took over all its work. Thus three independent groups came to the fore in Petersburg in the autumn of 1897, and the political lull of 1897 did not continue into 1898.

At this time the most important work was conducted by the 'youngsters' in the Union. They were divided into two groups, which I shall call 'A' and 'B', and which were both at odds with the 'veterans'. Group A had its contacts chiefly at the Aleksandrovsk works, at Pal's, and generally along the Shlissel'burg Road. Group B had contacts in Kolpino, at the Port shipyard, at the Ekaterinhoff, Samsoniev, and Guk mills. Both groups issued leaflets in the name of the Union.

...On payday the Union distributed a large leaflet, almost a pamphlet, about the dismissal of ..two workers and the working conditions at the Port shipyard generally. It dealt in detail with the complicated and confusing wage system which tended to reduce the workers' earnings, with the system of calculating overtime work and with the frightful exploitation at the government plants. The leaflet opened with the words: 'They say that it is easy to fish in muddy waters!' It declared that the workers' troubles were due to their failure to understand clearly who their enemies were; it explained the contradiction of interests between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and said that the latter depended on the strength of 'spies, soldiers, and gendarmes'. Despite this, it continued, the proletariat must wage its fight with the bosses.

The leaflet unleashed a real furore. A strike was ready to break out, but the management forestalled it by abolishing the fines and by openly initiating an inquiry into the abuses exposed in the leaflet. At Guk's mill a leaflet also provoked the strike which had long been prepared by the workers' unrest. The workers went to the office and won their chief demand. The strike was originally to be called immediately after the leaflet had appeared, but large numbers of police and gendarmes appeared as soon as it was distributed. 'With the leaflet in our hands', says one of the workers, 'we did not venture to continue the agitation and kept quiet'. Two days later the police were withdrawn, and the workers went to the office. They gained the introduction of a minimum wage. I believe that this was the only instance when textile workers presented a minimum-wage demand. A week later, using the same method, they won all the other demands contained in the leaflet. In Kolpino a proclamation was issued in connexion with the steep lowering of wage rates... a strike began on 1 May. Groups of workers walked along the streets, singing revolutionary songs. Cossacks were brought in and several clashes followed. Some 400 persons were arrested...

Such was the work conducted for the Union by its young members in Group B and Group A. By now Rabochaia Mysl' also had contacts at the Putilov plant, at the Obukhovskii plant, and in Kolpino. But most of its energies were concentrated on the newspaper, the third number of which was in preparation. The Rab. Znamia group concentrated all its energies on its publications. In the spring it published its May Day proclamation, well written and printed. It suddenly became known that a Party Congress had taken place (in March 1898). A Manifesto appeared, and the Party published its May Day proclamation. The only group represented at the Congress was that of the 'veterans'. In other words - all the active groups had been ignored by the organisers of the Congress.

The formal unification of the Party did not affect the factional relations in Petersburg. The effort to unite all groups was made not by the agents of the Congress, but by the youngsters. Despite the serious losses resulting from the arrests of 11-12 March, the groups succeeded in reaching an agreement, and joint work was planned for the autumn. The proposed agreement meant, broadly speaking, that agitation would be devoted to economic struggle while propaganda publications would raise political demands.

During the summer work continued and contacts were extended, but no proclamations were published. The only publication to appear was the third issue of Rabochaia Mysl'. New arrests took place on 29 July. The greatest losses were suffered by Rabochee Znamia. Moreover, its press in Belostok was seized. The arrests involved the Bund as well, and the illegal transport route to Petersburg had to be abandoned. Rabochaia Mysl' also suffered. The Petersburg Union lost the people who had held its various constituent elements together.

In the autumn, forces had to gathered afresh. Group A gradually established closer relations with Rabochee Znamia. Group B established contacts with Rabochaia Mysl' and worked parallel with it. But even at this time these two sides were so close to each other that Group A and Group B formally remained in one organisation, the Union, and there were new talks about the unification of all groups. The existing disagreements were recognized, but it seemed possible to satisfy both factions within a single organization not by way of compromise but by a division of functions. It was proposed to publish two organs: Rabochaia Mysl' for wide circles of workers, and Rabochee Znamia, with a pronounced political character, for the advanced strata. The central organization was to be composed of two members from the Union (actually Group B), two from Rabochee Znamia and Group A, two from Rabochaia Mysl', and one from the veterans.

Thus the Union, as represented by its younger members, again came forward as the champion of the idea of democratic unification. The proposition worked out at this time (Oct. 98) by the Union Abroad - that we must 'take into account the different levels attained by the various strata of the proletariat' - described a situation which was well understood in Petersburg too. It was this situation which inspired the unification efforts and policies of the young Union. The 'veterans' were determined to retain the right to make policy untrammelled and to control the affairs of the Union. The 'youngsters', groups A and B, in their struggle against the 'veterans' demanded 'democratic principles of organisation' (this was the term they used), responsibility of the central group to all members of the organisation, controls, and the electoral principle. They argued that all active members who had direct contacts with the workers' groups and who, therefore, in a sense, were representative of the labour movement, should participate in the central group. Among the workers the struggle went on throughout the autumn and ended in a victory of the youngsters.

Rab. Znamia at this time attained its greatest influence, thanks particularly to its ties with Group A. The circles at the Pal' and Maxwell cotton mills, the Putilov plant, and the Obukhovskii steel mill were under its influence. It was also instrumental in the strike organised at Maxwell's...

The plan for the unification of all groups was fully worked out at a meeting on 10 Dec. In the negotiations the Union (Group B) favoured the complete merger of all groups into a single organisation, the Union of Struggle, which had now also become the Petersburg Committee of the Party. Rab. Znamia and Rab. Mysl' wanted a federal union which would leave its constituent elements with full autonomy. The Union regarded the proposed agreement as the internal reform of a joint enterprise and as a step forward for the various organisations involved. It felt, therefore, that under these conditions the independent existence of Rab. Mysl' and Rab. Znamia would be superfluous. The work done by Rab. Mysl', the newspaper of the Petersburg workers, as well as the work done by Rab. Znamia were but the necessary and essential functions of a single local organisation. On the other hand, the existence of independent organisations would inevitably compel them both to engage in diverse local activities. Thus there would be three mutually exclusive and competing groups in Petersburg and an intensification of ideological and tactical disputes. On a number of questions there were disagreements, but these disagreements could and should exist side by side within one and the same organisation. It was only with such an approach to unification and democratic organisational principles that the Union would seek to unite the Rab. Mysl' and Rabochee Znamia.

Despite the fact that on the night of 14-15 Dec. a new police raid wiped out Rab. Znamia, an agreement was reached by the remaining organisations at the end of December. Rab. Mysl' became the organ of the Committee and was joined by many intelligently... After the agreement Rab. Mysl' ceased to exist in Petersburg as an independent group. New members drawn to Rab. Mysl' joined the Union of Struggle directly. The Union of Struggle (the Petersburg Committee of the Party) thus became the only organisation in the capital which united all the remaining groups, and all the available Social Democratic forces. It was also joined by a number of propagandists who until now had worked alone and who had firm ties among the workers. Moreover, the influx of funds increased.

Newly united by the agreement of December 98, the Union began in January to work out its plans for the coming May Day campaign. It was decided to publish long questionnaires for agitators and two short ones specifically for the steel and textile workers. The information thus collected was to serve as the basis for a series of leaflets to be issued before May to various factories. In April two leaflets were to be published for the engineering and textile workers. And, finally, there was to be a general proclamation for 1 May summing up the results of the year's work, calling for a general strike on 1 May. ..

The entire Group X [this may possibly be the agitators' group in the Union] was wiped out in the beginning of March. On 20 March a part of Group B was rounded up. On 16 April the group at the Technology Institute was arrested. On 19 April several members of the Rab.Mysl' were seized while transporting a load of illegal literature. The general leaflets were not issued at all, and the demands that were to be raised in them were published in the May Day proclamation. The proclamation, incidentally, was quite different from the one planned. According to the initial plan the proclamation was to speak about the international significance of the 1 May holiday, the political goals of the Social Democratic movement, and the eight-hour working day. The comrades evidently had in mind two previous experiments in producing May Day leaflets. In 1896 'many workers said that if it had not been for the May Day leaflet there would have been no May strikes..This view is exaggerated but it is typical' (Peterburzhets). In 1898 the Party's May Day leaflet, excellently produced and containing very good demands, had no effect..The pre-May campaign of 1899 was excellently planned, and it was not through any fault of the comrades that it was not carried out.

At the height of these events the Group for the Self-Emancipation of the Working Class was formed in March. It was wiped out several months later by the mass arrests which followed when the authorities discovered that one of their new prisoners had in his possession a list of the workers implicated. This group formulated its basic position in a proclamation issued in April 99. "The Union, which is made up of intelligenty, has really most touching intentions. But it keeps out of its organisation precisely those whose interests it undertakes to 'defend'..The workers must at last take their own cause into their own hands."

"We are not throwing political struggle overboard, for we remember all too clearly that political freedom is one of the conditions for the triumph of the working-class. But we do not want political agitation to hang in mid-air; we want it to be linked with the immediate, realistic needs of the working-class, to answer the pressing demands of the moment. Politics are the superstructure which rests on the social relations of production, and political agitation should be the superstructure which serves the economic struggle; politics must grow out of this struggle and follow it. Propaganda is a different matter. Here our political ideals can and should be developed to their full scale."

It would be difficult in a few lines to improve on this document's brief summary of the character and tactics of the entire third period: organisation along democratic lines and proclamations which demanded no more than civil rights.

In the pre-publication announcement of Iskra, it was said that the emergence of the Group for the Self-Emancipation of the Working Class proved that the ideas of the 'Credo' had been influential [the Group for Self-Emancipation was denounced as guilty of extreme 'Economism']. As the above quotation shows, the Group for Self-Emancipation had nothing in common with the 'Credo'. To be exact, it expressed diametrically opposite views. The fact that Iskra could confuse these two viewpoints shows graphically how poorly it understood the events then taking place and how it confused all thinking about the Party's historical development. Today only the publicists of the 'new Iskra' raise as something novel the slogan of the Petersburg workers of 1899, 'Down with self-appointed representatives!'

As I have said, the arrests of the spring of 1899 greatly weakened all organisations. In the autumn the leading role in agitation was assumed by the Group of Twenty. A number of people, unwilling to be bound by the traditions of the old groups, proposed to publish their own organ. In their views they considered themselves more akin to the Rabochee Znanie group than to any other. This group managed to gather together people with good contacts and to unify fourteen workers' circles. It issued two proclamations and in Jan.1900, Rabochii Listok (Labour News Sheet). The first blow was struck at this group on 4 Oct. when eleven comrades

were arrested. In early spring unrest among the students absorbed all the energies of the group; the arrests of 13 Mar and 29 April brought the work to a total standstill.

Such was the complicated course followed by the factional disputes during the third stage of the movement in Petersburg. I shall try to summarise it briefly. At the beginning of the third stage - so-called Economism - the work was conducted chiefly by the Union, but at the same time Rabochaia Mysl' and Rabochee Znanie also developed and gained strength. The spirit of the time made itself felt in the Union too. The younger members of the Union were not united in their views: Group A inclined toward Rabochee Znanie, and Group B toward Rabochaia Mysl'. Group C - the 'veterans' - was displeased with everything and lost touch with active work. (Lenin's view that 'the original policy of the Union of Struggle was dominant in Petersburg, at any rate until 1898', is entirely unfounded and erroneous.) At the end of this period, in the spring of 1899, the Union succeeded in unifying the entire work in Petersburg, but numerous arrests once again nullified this achievement.

Having outlined the main developments in the history of the organisations in Petersburg, I shall now discuss the tactics of the Petersburg comrades from 1897 to 1900. It became apparent that a new period had begun when the Union felt driven to raise demands in its leaflets for civil rights - freedom to strike, freedom of assembly, free speech and press, and inviolability of person. The Union had no time for demands that could not be backed up by power. It was futile to raise 'demands' that clearly could not be realised. Such demands are mere wishes. Of course, it said, we must make propaganda for our aspirations; but only those aspirations which can be backed up by sufficient forces and means should be raised as demands. Agitation is a call to war. Leaflets raise demands and guide the war. Hence, in our publications we must make propaganda for universal, equal and secret electoral rights; but it would be futile and misplaced to set forth this aim in a leaflet as a demand when it is known beforehand that the workers will do nothing to defend this demand, and when the organisation itself does not explain how this wish is to be achieved. Such was the attitude of the Union.

Inevitably, the question occurs: can civil rights be attained under an autocratic regime?

"We knew very well (I was told by a comrade from Group B) that they were not attainable given the autocracy. But we felt that these demands would logically, organically, lead the workers to a demand for broader political rights. This was a consciously chosen method to provide the masses with a practical political education. It is absurd to think that we reconciled ourselves to absolutism at the time, and merely demanded concessions from it. It was clear to everyone that this was only an agitational device which would lead to the overthrow of the autocracy."

In this, however, the Union differed from Rabochaia Znanie, which found it possible and necessary to give first place to the call for the overthrow of absolutism, to issue leaflets of a sharply political character, and to publish a political newspaper.

But then an event occurred that was subsequently widely discussed in our press and that still remains unexplained. The organised workers at Maxwell's prepared a leaflet and turned it over to the agitators for printing. The Maxwell factory was one of those in which the Rabochee Znanie group was active. The leaflets were issued in the name of the Union of Struggle. Hence the leaflet of 13 Dec. was to have been published by Group A of the 'young' members of the Union. This group was sharply political in character; it was not satisfied with the Union, and still less with Rabochaia Mysl'. Moreover, Group A had in practice gone over to Rabochee Znanie, whose very raison d'être was the fact that it emphasised the need for political action. How could it have happened, then, that this group deleted from the workers' leaflet the demand for the right to strike and assemble?

And yet it was obvious that the workers had included these demands deliberately and were annoyed when they were left out of the leaflet. When a factory inspector came to them on 15 Dec and asked what they wanted, voices from the crowd replied that they wanted the things demanded in the leaflets and also freedom to strike and assemble...

This incident has usually been cited to show 'the lengths to which the Economists sometimes go'. But the important thing about it is precisely that it involved people who were not Economists and who sought for an occasion to act differently from the Economists. I can explain it to myself only by the supposition that Rabochee Znamia considered itself too political to raise 'immediate' and 'partial' political demands - in other words, to raise demands for civil rights under the autocratic regime.

Only this supposition can explain the fact that those who in theory placed extreme emphasis on politics proved, over a long period in their practical work, to be politically more moderate than the so-called Economists. It was still impossible to urge in proclamations the overthrow of the autocracy as an immediate goal. This was felt by everyone. At the same time, to raise demands for 'partial' political rights was regarded by the 'politicians' as a compromise. Subsequent events demonstrated that the tactics of the so-called Economists were correct, for they led to their objective - the struggle against the existing political order. The fact cited above shows, too, that only these tactics were possible, for those of their opponents led in reality to political inaction.

The Rabochee Znamia group never had any firm or substantial ties with workers and could act only while a third group (beside the Union) existed in Petersburg - first the Group of Technology Students, then Group A, then the Group of Twenty, and finally the Socialist Group. Given the practical programme of Rabochee Znamia, which consisted, properly speaking, only of 'training conscious agitators in the propaganda circles', it was impossible then, and will always remain impossible, to create a firm organisation. Rabochee Znamia had its adherents chiefly among the intelligentsia; it was supported also by the Polish Socialist Party - the PPS. The viewpoint represented by Rabochee Znamia has been replaced or, to be more precise, is being continued by Iskra-ism. And just as Rabochee Znamia was alien and unconnected with the workers' movement in Petersburg, so Iskra-ism has withdrawn from the workers' movement in Russia, has opened a gap between the Social Democrats and the working-class.

When the Party had passed beyond the stage of so-called Economism this period was subjected to a myopic critique. The stress then laid on strikes (stachkizm) was not recognised as a tremendously significant expression of purely proletarian, albeit primitive, warfare. As for the political significance of the events I have described, at the time, they were judged at their true worth even by our enemy - the government - and even by people who favoured only 'politics'.

In the journal Nashe Vremia (Our Time), published by the People's Rights society (Narodnoe Pravo), which was concerned solely with the political struggle, we read the following about the strikes of 1897 and early 1898:

"The facts are all of a kind, even monotonous. To some readers they may seem altogether uninteresting; the same thing over and over again: reductions in piece rates, impositions and abuses, demands for penny increases, strikes...and, as a result, either penny concessions to the workers, or defeat and a sullen return to work under the old conditions. Indeed, the same, grey, 'undramatic' events! Grey and undramatic, like our entire life, like everything we do. Yet...the most humdrum, the greyest strike, however dull its story may seem, is an event of enormous, of vital significance to all its participants, and not to the participants alone. Whoever was in Petersburg in the summer of 1897, whoever saw and heard what was happening and what was being said in the streets of our capital during the general strike of the

textile workers, will probably agree with us. Those alert, excited faces, that heightened tone in the conversations of people accustomed to silent labour... Everyone speaking loudly, asserting that they would not yield until they won. And you felt that within the most ordinary, most average member of this crowd a man had awakened. Amidst the total and age-old silence, you heard a single protesting voice, the voice of the worker. His speech was still incoherent, still primitive, still expressed only immediate needs and 'crude' material interests. But it was the speech of men, not slaves! The cause of freedom had been born and was growing. And the effect of such events on other social groups could also be observed in the streets. The most modest, the most humdrum strike is a great event as an element of the future."

Agitation through leaflets, as we have seen, was continued by the Union and Group B in exactly the same spirit as before. But in other spheres work was taking on a new form different from that of the Union when run by the veterans. The 'youngsters', the so-called Economists, now set themselves up in opposition to the 'veterans'. They differed in their approach to the working-class, the various strata of workers, the workers' needs, and the workers' independent activities. They disagreed about the organisations emerging among the workers, the party structure (to be built from 'above' or from 'below'), the principle of democratic organisation, the programme, propaganda, and agitation. They also differed in their attitude toward the intelligentsia, toward liberal society... toward the economic and the political struggle. The disagreements on all these questions made themselves felt and were understood; unfortunately, they did not find their way into print at the time...

The agitational tactics of the so-called Economist period were twice brilliantly vindicated by history. First, they permitted the Social Democrats to lead the proletarian masses in their class struggle. Even the opponents of these tactics admitted that they 'revolutionized the moods and the minds of the proletariat' (Aksel'rod). Second, the opposite tactics, followed by Iskra-ism, weakened the ties between the proletariat and the Social Democratic movement and culminated in total fiasco. (Cf. Aksel'rod states that 'during the period of so-called Economism, our movement struck deep roots in the proletariat, revolutionised the moods and the minds of considerable circles within it and stimulated their revolutionary activity' (Iskra no.55). He says further in the same article, 'Thus the result of the Party struggle between revolutionary Social Democrats (Iskra) and the parochialists has been the triumph of bureaucratic centralism in the party organisation. In short, the ideological crust is revolutionary Social Democratic, but the real content, in essence and principle, scarcely transcends the framework of bourgeois revolutionism.' Having become convinced, during the fourth period, that the paper on which Iskra is printed will bear anything, Aksel'rod comes to the following conclusion: 'The major facts have thus graphically and clearly vindicated the criticism of the theory and practice of so-called Economism, which was initiated by the publications of the Group for the Emancipation of Labour and was continued by Iskra.' I can only add to this that Comrade Aksel'rod does not cite these 'major' facts or indeed any other facts, contenting himself with a discourse on what 'would have' happened.) Nevertheless, the foes of so-called Economism assert that such ties had been created at the price of bringing Social Democracy down to the level of the masses, at the price of deserting the principles of revolutionary Social Democracy. This is profoundly untrue. While the agitation of the Union of Struggle transformed the 'moods and the minds of the proletariat', its propaganda brought to the proletariat a knowledge of scientific socialism. And in this respect the period of 1898-9 unquestionably witnessed a step forward.

The oldest Petersburg programme for systematic propaganda I have been able to discover belongs to 1896. It is entitled A Study Programme for the Petersburg Workers' Circles and contains seventeen lectures. The last of these lectures is a conclusion, and the last but one deals with the history of the socialist movement in Western Europe. In the footnotes I quote the outline for the fifteenth lecture. (Fifteenth lecture. The workers' movement and the tactics to be used by both agricultural and industrial workers for better living conditions (strikes, unions, funds, arbitration courts, boycott, May Day celebrations). The importance of the various strata of the proletariat for the class struggle. The attitude of Russian law toward the workers' struggle for their existence. Self-awareness - the idea of the working-class and self-emancipation; universal suffrage and political struggle, the significance of parliament for the proletariat. The importance of legislation in safeguarding concessions already gained by the workers. The policy to subject all the means of production, distribution, and exchange to democratic control, and the idea of socialization of means of production. The attitude of our regime toward the self-awareness and the self-emancipation of the workers, and the attitude of the workers to the existing order.) It leaves no doubt that its writers were socialists and regarded the political struggle as one of the means of achieving their objectives. Consequently, there is no suggestion here that our principles were being lowered to the level of mass understanding. On the contrary, the propagandists raised the workers in the circles to the level where they clearly understood Social Democratic principles.

This applies in still greater measure to the period from 1897 to 1900. In order to improve its propaganda work, the Union, in the autumn of 1898, undertook to prepare A Programme for Self-Education, which, like the 'Questions' in agitation, would systematize and unify all propaganda work. The experience of the preceding years showed that the longer and more detailed the programme for courses of study and lectures, the less they achieved. The lecture form generally did not satisfy the workers. Police conditions in Petersburg permit only small groups to gather periodically; besides, the composition of the groups is always changing. A revolutionary's period of activity is too short; the arrest of a propagandist removes his skill and experience from the scene, and the continuity of the propaganda work is broken.

In preparing A Programme for Self-Education, the Union sought to make propaganda a collective undertaking, to have the programme embody accumulated personal experience and elaborate on it. Moreover, aware of the fact that as the movement grew it was constantly outstripping the influx of educated manpower and that the influence of the propagandist was confined to small circles, the Union wanted the workers to run their own propaganda activity. With the aid of this programme, the Union hoped to help the workers educate themselves without making them wait for the propagandist to answer every question. In this way it expected to give the more educated workers an opportunity to exert a systematic influence on those less advanced. In turn, this would enable the propagandists to put their energies to another urgent task: the organisation of ad hoc lectures and discussions on current events and on special problems of propaganda and tactics. It was not until several years later that the Petersburg comrades managed to make this plan a reality: in 1901 the Workers Organization (Rabochaia Organizatsiia) published a series of propagandist pamphlets, Problems of Russian Life and Letters about How Things Work and Don't Work, which represented the first attempt to conduct a systematic propaganda course by the printed word.

The character of A Programme for Self-Education was set ed above all by the need to train conscious Social Democrats. It was decided not to depart far from the present day, not to begin with problems of the universe, Darwin's theory, or primitive culture, as had been the custom earlier, but to start with a general vivid description of the classes and social groups in modern society and its fundamental contradictions. The question,

'What do people live by?' was posed at the outset. The answer was given first in the most general terms, in descriptions of modern exploitation of the working people and in a statement of the socialist ideal. After that, other problems were raised: the origin of the capitalist system, the economic evolution and social differentiation of Europe, the changes of political forms since the Great Revolution, social and political movements in Europe, the economic condition of Russia and its political system, the revolutionary movement in Russia, the international Social Democratic movement, the Social Democratic programme. A detailed study of the Erfurt programme with the aid of Kautsky's book was suggested as a summing up of this short course in self-education.

The text of the programme was in the form of a conspectus. On each topic there were footnotes referring to legal and illegal publications, which were listed in order from easy to difficult and divided into three sections. By taking the first part, one obtained a bibliography and an explanatory text for workers with little cultural background; the second part was suitable for intermediate groups; and the third part was for the more advanced. Such bibliographies combined with the Programme for Self-education made it possible to bring the entire Social Democratic programme to all strata of the working-class. All that was required was to vary the difficulty of the course. Since the available literature, legal and illegal was inadequate, a series of small pamphlets was planned on various propaganda questions. The Union tried to recruit comrades in exile and abroad to write these pamphlets and to elaborate the programme. It also sought the aid of writers outside the revolutionary underground for the publication of legal pamphlets. The plans were extensive, perhaps even too extensive. But at any rate, they certainly did not reveal that indifference to theory which has been so shamelessly attributed to so-called Economism by Social Democrats who forget their origins....

And so these were the practical objectives which the young Union of 1898-9 set itself: (1) to unify all Social Democratic groups and forces of Petersburg into a single organisation - The Union of Struggle (The Petersburg Committee of the Party) - which would be based on a division of functions and on a democratic organisation; (2) to strengthen and systematize agitation (the 'Questions' and a series of leaflets); (3) to intensify and systematize propaganda ('A Programme for Self-Education' and a series of pamphlets); (4) a journal for the working masses - Rabochaia Mysl'; (5) a journal for advanced workers - Rabochee Znamia; (6) the May Day general strike in Petersburg.

I shall now give a brief description of the Rabochaia Mysl' group - brief, because we already have the specialised work of Comrade Peterburzhets on this question. The peculiar and characteristic trait of the Rabochaia Mysl' group was that it strove consciously to make its newspaper mirror exactly the ideas of the Petersburg workers. "Rabochaia Mysl' will reflect the workers' life in its true light. It will help to awaken in them an interest in their surroundings, to express their needs, and to overwhelm our tyrannical system with contempt and ridicule." These were the concluding words of the leading article in the first number, which set forth the objectives of the editors.

For decades the Russian socialists sought to make the workers think for themselves. And gradually the mind of the worker came to life. From the days of Khalturin, the workers' thoughts tried to break out, to shape themselves in words, to manifest themselves in a workers' newspaper. For a long, long time they failed, crushed as it were in the vice of the autocratic political regime. At last, on the peripheries of Russia, in Vilna and Petersburg, the workers managed in the same year to create their own newspapers, Arbeter Shtime and Rabochaia Mysl'. The Jewish intelligenty - Social Democrats - caught the voice of the workers, supported it, made it loud, strong and glorious. But it was actually the orthodox wing of the 'revolutionary' Social Democrats that ridiculed and condemned the thinking

of the Petersburg worker. True, his ideas were untutored, clumsy, unsubtle! Nevertheless, it is a matter for rejoicing that there were Social Democrats, Economists, in Petersburg who supported and served those workers who thought for themselves! For this they should be forgiven all the errors that were forced upon them on this difficult road. (Several years later the Voronezh workers wrote a letter to the (Social Democratic) committees about the question of organising the Second Congress. Iskra ridiculed the letter as 'illiterate'. 'Yes, it is true that we had no time to learn enough grammar', the Voronezh workers replied to this criticism.)

The so-called Economists are accused of 'lowering socialism to the level of the mass mind' by creating a newspaper which merely expressed the thinking of the workers, instead of introducing the workers to new ideas. 'Perhaps it is a mistake', says Peterburzhets at the end of his pamphlet, 'to conduct a workers' newspaper along these lines. But this is an altogether different question, which we shall perhaps discuss elsewhere at some other time.' It seems to me that there can be only one answer to this question: such newspapers are not enough for the Social Democratic movement, but they are enormously important and necessary, for the thinking of the workers can develop only on the condition (though not the sole condition) that the workers have an opportunity to formulate their ideas. Indeed, is it only the working class which needs such a newspaper?

(People are constantly attributing to me the view that the Social Democratic movement at every stage of its development is merely a reflection of the moods and views of the working-class at a particular historical moment. I have never said this. I hope that my subsequent works will show that I attribute a far greater creative significance to ideas than do my factional opponents. But even the formula employed by my organisation, the Union Abroad, to express its attitude toward theory acknowledges its prime importance: 'Social Democrats can only be effective if they guide themselves not only by the general principles of scientific socialism, but also by the general political conditions and the degree of development of the labour movement'. Thus we consider that the first condition for effective Social Democratic action is to be guided by the principles of scientific socialism. But our opponents have been doctrinaire about the doctrine by which we wish to guide ourselves. They have become entangled in contradictions, between doctrines and reality, and we therefore consider it essential to stress that Social Democrats as men of action must reckon with the realities of the time.)

The first issue of the radical-democratic newspaper Osvobozhdenie (Liberation) carried an editorial which contained the following lines: 'To give literary expression to ideas which have already formed and matured - such is our aim. We would be quite content if we had nothing more to do than simply record the political ideas which had been freely formulated in Russia; if, here abroad, we could just print the words of liberty emerging from Russia, and act as mere typesetters and printers.' Iskra (no. 23) cites these words as evidence that the editor of the latter 'is too moderate, too non-revolutionary even to urge forward the liberal democrats'. Iskra finds in this a confirmation of the idea that 'every bourgeoisie is a stern "master" to the political and literary spokesmen of its class, to its "ideologists" - a master who seeks to turn the ideologists into mere "recorders", mere coolies at its own service.' By its ironic quotation marks, Iskra is saying: what kind of 'ideologists' are these, after all, when they are merely 'recorders' and 'coolies'?

Nevertheless, not all the 'orthodox' Social Democrats responded in this way to Struve's statement. Here is what Gd. Riazanov, whom Plekhanov characterised as an 'orthodox pedant', wrote about it:

"We hail you, Mr. Struve! We shall certainly have no criticism of you if you merely record the uncensored political thinking of the bourgeoisie. We, too, should like simply to record the uncensored political thought of the working-class. We are proud to be the spokesmen for the interests of the working-class, proud to formulate as best we can its political ideas, which must be ours as well. We always reply with contempt when various 'important' people accuse us of being coolies in the service of the proletariat...."

Still, the Iskra editors - or at least half of them - should have remembered that they too had a different view on this question when Rabotnik began publication in 1896:

"We address our modest publication to the new, working-class Russia, which is our joy, our pride. We shall devote it entirely to the interests of the working-class. We shall not impose our views upon the workers who read our publication. We do not assume the role of leaders. We only want to be as useful as we can to those dispossessed but energetic and courageous labourers who are fighting in our distant and unhappy homeland for their economic and political freedom. The pages of our publication will be open to all workers who wish to discuss their problems and to express their aspirations. But we are firmly convinced that the more clearly our readers come to understand the tasks that await them and the significance of their own situation, the more resolutely they will rally to the Social Democratic banner."

The Group for the Emancipation of Labour not only stated its readiness 'not to impose its views', but even refused the 'role of leaders'! That was going too far! And so, the fact that Rabochaia Mysl' strove merely to mirror the workers' thinking cannot in itself be branded as an error of the so-called Economists....

Narrow as it was in its political objectives, Rabochaia Mysl' took a step forward. It was an advance on the previous stage reached by the movement - that stage which Lenin presents as the golden age of the Russian Social Democratic movement. Rabochaia Mysl' broadened the workers' circle of interests from the economic, to which the proclamations of 1895 were confined, to the socio-legal. There is no doubt that the founders of the Union of Struggle of 1895 were subjectively more conscious and advanced politically than the founders of Rabochaia Mysl'. It is all the more interesting and significant, therefore, that objectively, in what they wrote, they placed more emphasis than Rabochaia Mysl' on economic concerns

And so, the objective significance of Rabochaia Mysl' was that during the period of so-called Economism it served a special purpose - it fulfilled one of the tasks of Social Democracy. It was successful in its attempt to let the workers formulate their own line of thought.

4

It was with a heavy heart that comrades left for Petersburg in the autumn of 1900. Everything was crushed. Everything had to be started again. But how? Was it best to re-establish one of the former organisations, broaden its programme, and seek to unify the Petersburg comrades? Or perhaps it would be better to give up the old names which, because of the ideas associated with them, might interfere with unification, and found a new organisation? But would this new organisation be just one more among all the others? Would it not simply increase that fragmentation of effort which it was intended to eliminate? All these difficult questions vanished of themselves as soon as work was begun.

Not everything had been destroyed, as it turned out; the circles created by the Union had not collapsed after the massive arrests, but had actually expanded rapidly during the summer and now formed an entire organisation of many hundreds of workers. When the agitators who had returned to Petersburg came to them and began to present their plans for an organisation and a programme, they were told that an organisation and a programme already existed. There was a Workers Committee.

This unexpected declaration made a great impression on the intelligenty. Some were offended by the cold and somewhat slighting reply of the workers to their self-sacrificing teachers of the recent past. Others saw in it a cause for real enthusiasm. 'At last', they said, 'the intelligentsia will take up its proper position - a subordinate position - in the workers' movement.' The Union published the programme of the Workers Committee. This first attempt of the workers in Petersburg to formulate their principles in a programme is far from perfect. But it is important to note that the political tasks awaiting the workers' movement are stated here for the first time. In the autumn of 1900 the Union, which was joined by the Workers Committee, was strong, and its strength at the same time marked the triumph of two principles: organisation, and a new enthusiasm for political action. Even Rabochaia Mysl', no.9, declared that the overthrow of the autocracy was the workers' most important task.

In the programme of the Workers Committee, published in Rabochaia Mysl', no.11, but drafted earlier, in the autumn of 1900, we read among other things that 'the ultimate goal of the workers' movement is the political and economic emancipation of the working-class, which can be attained only by the Social Democratic movement of the broad labouring masses'. 'The Union supports this struggle (in defence of the workers' vital daily interests) in every possible way. It strives to transform every unorganised movement into an organised, conscious battle against capitalist exploitation and the Tsarist government.' 'The Union goes hand in hand with all the Social Democratic groups and considers their unification a matter of prime importance.' 'The unity of the enemy - the government - means that we must consider temporary alliances with other revolutionary factions in specific cases.'

But the Union continued to be 'cautious'. In Rabochii Listok (Labour News Sheet), no.5, also issued in Dec.1900, workers are called upon to prepare for the struggle. 'Our fate is sad, our sufferings heavy; much injustice is done us, and our demands should not be petty.' In reality, however, the demands were quite petty; they were purely economic, and only the last - the vaguest - was broader: 'the right to assemble in order to discuss our needs, freedom of organisation, and strikes'.

This disparity between the Committee's agitation and its political programme annoyed those comrades who were more advanced politically. They grouped themselves around the remnants of the Group of Twenty, called themselves the Socialist Group, and published a proclamation in which they clearly stated their disagreements with the Union. The Socialist Group presented its programme in the first publication issued by the Social Democratic (Workers) Library. (Editorial statement, Social Democratic Workers Library, no.1, 1900: "In order to attain both our immediate aims (a considerable improvement in the material and spiritual condition of the labouring masses) and our ultimate goals (the triumph of a new, socialist order) it is essential that the working-class be organised as a political party, ie, a party which sets out to prepare the masses for the conquest of political power. To prepare the labouring masses for the great day of their liberation, to educate them by means of politico-economic warfare to such an extent that they will be able to exploit their coming victory - such is the present goal of the labour movement in Western Europe. The tasks of the Russian movement are both broader and more complex. The workers' movement in Russia is beginning in a period when despotism is still in full sway. In the west, a bourgeois revolution was

possible; in our country it is not. The Russian bourgeoisie is perfectly content for the time being. The absolutist government has allied with it. The workers' movement alone courageously fights its way ahead. It cannot develop successfully and broadly until the workers win political freedom for themselves. If in the West political freedom was achieved by the bourgeois revolution, in our country it can be won only by a proletarian revolution. Russian workers must make an intensive effort to develop their political thinking. The economic struggle and organisation of the masses must go on, but it must be injected with the living spirit of the political fight." 1) Although fewer workers' organisations had been linked to the Group of Twenty than were attached to the Union, they too gained in strength during the summer of 1900; by autumn they were in full fighting condition, and the work progressed rapidly. The (Socialist) Group declared in a proclamation that it had "deliberately refrained from joining the Committee, since it found that the latter's official organ Rabochiaia Mysl', on the one hand, tended to sympathise with the moderate wing of the German Social Democratic Party and almost ignored the local and immediate conditions of Russian life while on the other hand it lacked confidence in the ability of the working-masses to gain political self-awareness" (Jan.1901).

At the same time that Rabochii Listok no.5 and Rabochiaia Mysl' no.11 appeared, the Socialist group issued a proclamation (Dec.1900) which declared that 'apart from a few of our more gifted and politically conscious comrades, the workers until recently had only a very vague understanding of the necessity to fight for political freedom, but as time went on the workers began to understand that the struggle must be waged not only with capitalists, and not only for economic interests.' They began to understand that without 'political freedom, that is, the right to participate in the government of the state through elected representatives, without the right to associate and assemble, without freedom of speech, press and conscience, and without inviolability of person, the workers could not radically improve their position'. The Socialist Group - or Labour Organisation, as it was called - therefore expressed its desire to 'cooperate with this ever-growing consciousness among the workers. It is convinced that the working-class is already so strong that in the near future it will begin to fight openly for its political rights.'

We see, then, that in December the Union was still speaking with caution about the struggle against the government. On the other hand, the Socialist Group also felt it necessary to be cautious; the 'changes in the moods of the working-class' were said in its proclamation to be of 'recent' origin, while the struggle for political rights, after all, was not to begin until the future, albeit the near future.

All these developments took place in Dec.1900. The beginning of the new year 1901 was, therefore, exactly the right moment to hope for the shift of the labour movement in Petersburg to political warfare. And indeed the war did begin during the 'March days'. A unified organisation was needed to direct this struggle, and, as we have seen, such an organisation was already being prepared by events.

1 The editorial was written by M.I. Broido who ran the illegal publishing organisation referred to by Akinov. Broido's views about the nature of the coming revolution in Russia shows that even if he gave it its most systematic expression, Trotsky was by no means the first Social Democrat in that period to propose the theory of 'permanent revolution' for Russia. Deutscher's assertion (The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879-1921, p.105) that "Trotsky would be the first to say that the revolution would of its own momentum pass from the bourgeois to the socialist stage, and establish a proletarian dictatorship in Russia..." is pure hagiography. /BCP/

During the previous- the third - period (1897-1900), four groups successively held the leading role in Petersburg: the Union of Struggle, Rabochaia Mysl', Rabochee Znamia, and the Group of Twenty. And if the second period (1894-7) was marked by the tendency of the Social Democratic forces to unite into a single Union of Struggle, the third period, on the contrary, was marked by organisational fragmentation. The second period was clear and simple; it can be encompassed at a glance. The third presents a mosaic of small facts, a network of individual episodes, which I have tried to depict. But memory does not preserve their full diversity, and it is difficult for the mind to grasp their inter-relation. This is why the second period seems so bright and the third so confused and tangled; one wishes the new period to resemble the second, rather than the third.

And yet the third period was one of progress rather than regression, compared with the second. Of course, it would have been best if a single organisation had been sufficiently strong, stable, and competent at the time to meet the multiple demands of the advanced and complex workers' movement in Petersburg. But the constant arrests annually robbed the movement of dozens of people and gave the young political leaders no chance to gain experience, to develop a many-sided approach, to answer the needs both of the most ill-prepared strata and of those already growing familiar with the idea of revolution. These different tasks were fulfilled by separate groups. It remained only for these groups to realise that they were performing separate tasks of one Social Democratic movement and to show the desire to unite. This was demanded by the very logic of events. It had been bequeathed to the new period by the past.

But in no case could, or should, the ideas of the different Petersburg organisations performing different Social Democratic functions have disappeared. Unification therefore could have taken place only on the basis of democratic organisational principles, which would have given each group a chance to maintain its own position. These organisational principles, upheld during the third period by the Union of Struggle, were advanced and upheld in the new stage of the movement by the Workers' Organisation. However, it was defeated by the new Iskra faction.

Why?

"The development of the labour movement under the banner of Social Democracy has made the workers feel all the more keenly the need for political rights. And since these rights are essentially incompatible with the autocratic regime, the overthrow of the autocracy has become for the labouring masses the immediate, concrete objective of their battle..."

By this time Social Democrats everywhere in Russia had set as their next objective that task which could be performed only by the united effort of the entire Russian proletariat - the overthrow of the autocracy. Thus special influence was now acquired by the Iskra group, which had seized upon objectives brought to the fore by the third period and as its slogan had taken the unification of the Party and the battle against autocracy.

Although the workers' movement in Russia was now advanced enough to enable the Social Democrats to place this aim on the agenda, it was still not sufficiently developed to give the correct proletarian answer to the problem and to avoid lapsing into radicalism. The organisational principles and tactics of Iskra were over-simplified and conspiratorial. They were all right for the average Social Democratic intelligent (intellectuals') group in Russia but could not answer the needs of the far advanced workers' movements in such centres as Petersburg or Ekaterinoslav, or of the Jewish proletariat in Poland and Lithuania. Therefore a long struggle ensued between the policies of Iskra and those of such purely proletarian organisations as the Bund, the Petersburg Workers Organisation, the 'old' Ekaterinoslav Organisation, and their ideological spokesman - the Union Abroad.

The Bund, as the strongest proletarian organisation, succeeded in maintaining its position although it had to break with the Party to do so. At the fifth stage of our Party's development, when the Russian movement will rise to the level attained by the Jewish workers' movement, the just demands of the Bund will be met by our Party. The Petersburg Workers' Organisation, which was not yet as advanced or as strong as the Bund, proved unable to hold its own in this struggle. As a result of the historical conditions under which Iskra appeared..it was able to win over, with a very few exceptions, the entire Social Democratic intelligentsia. The advanced Petersburg workers' movement was left without intelligenty. The workers' organisations in Kiev, Ekaterinoslav, and other cities were destroyed in a similar manner. And finally, their spokesman, the Union of Russian Social Democrats Abroad, like a superstructure with its foundation removed, inevitably collapsed.

I shall not venture at this moment to describe the full drama of the struggle between Iskra's 'organisation of professional revolutionaries' and the Workers Organisation in Petersburg. The events are still too recent, the documents involved still too little known. It is still too difficult to divest oneself of the subjective bitterness and chagrin evoked by these conflicts in the Party in Petersburg. But it is possible and necessary even now to point out the fact, an unfortunate fact for the Social Democratic movement, that not enough intelligenty were found in Petersburg to take on the leadership of its proletarian movement. Day after day the intelligenty who had assisted the Workers Organisation abandoned it. They lacked sufficient grit, courage, and political consciousness to stand firm on the summit to which they had been raised by the highly developed proletarian movement of Petersburg. The 'run of the mill' Social Democratic intelligenty could not withstand the overall trend of the intelligentsia at this stage of the Social Democratic movement in Russia. Some yielded to the influence of radicalism, which was so evident in Iskra; others for the sake of the Party's unity consciously abandoned the fight for internal democratic principles.

The Petersburg proletariat remained without the support of the intelligentsia. There are no longer any proclamations, leaflets, or newspapers to express its moods, its mind, its will! Its spirit once again works within, hidden from the eye, uncontrolled! What does the proletariat conceal within its depths? This mighty force which is building up unnoticeably and constantly in the proletariat will result in an explosion unexpected by enemy and friend alike. But how? And when?

(Geneva 1904)

WOMEN AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

(An attempt to synthesise the results of discussions held between the 3rd and 8th July)

Introduction

What is a revolutionary perspective for women? This is a question which communists have by and large evaded in one way or another. The most common mode of evasion is to say that the oppression of women is inevitable in capitalist society and can only be abolished when that society is overthrown. The conclusion: all efforts must be directed towards the overthrow of capitalist society, and women must be drawn into this effort wherever possible, or at least prevented from hindering it. Why this is an evasion is that it ignores the way in which the oppression of women is itself an obstacle to the overthrow of capitalism and why, therefore, a struggle against this oppression is an integral part of the struggle against capitalism. If the latter standpoint is accepted, then the elaboration of a revolutionary perspective for women can be seen to be a necessary task of communists. These discussions were an attempt to begin this task. To this end, certain fundamental questions were identified and sought to be answered: What are the roots of the oppression of women? What form does this oppression take in capitalist society? What movements have arisen in opposition to it, and what is the ideal tendency of these movements? What specific form does the oppression of women take in India? Have any movements arisen in opposition to it, and if so, what is their nature? It is out of the answers to these questions that the elements of a perspective would emerge.

The Roots of Oppression

The question we took up as our point of departure was: what are the roots of the oppression of women? The answer, proposed by Engels and subsequently accepted on the Left, that it is a consequence of the development of private property in the means of production, struck us as being inadequate. These roots, we felt, went deeper and originated earlier: the subjugation of women has been a feature of the most primitive and the most modern societies and appears to be rooted in some fundamental characteristic of the human race. What could this be?

One possible answer which was discussed was that this characteristic is the basic biological difference that makes it possible for a man to rape while a woman cannot. The implications of this can be drawn out by a comparison between human and animal sexuality. In animals, sexuality is linked with reproduction: likewise in human beings. But in animals a merely biological relationship is involved, while in human beings it is a human relationship. This means that on one side the relationship can rise far above what is possible for animals, to love; but on the other side it can also be degraded to a sub-animal level, to the forcible violation of another's person, to rape. On one side complete mutual affirmation of each other; on the other, self-affirmation as the total negation of the other's humanity, the reduction of the other to a passive object.

But the mere possibility of rape is not sufficient to account for its occurrence. The latter needs to be explained by the universal human desire for recognition. This can perhaps best be explained by an elaboration of Susan Brownmiller's metaphysical parable in terms of Hegel's Master/Slave dialectic. The primordial fight occurs not between a man and another man, but between a woman who rejects a man as mate and a man who tries to compel her to accept him. He seeks recognition of himself as a desirable partner, but can gain it only by negating her autonomy which gives her the right to say no. Hence the fight, in which the woman is inevitably defeated, raped, reduced to the status of a thing. Thus the first class division in society is that between men and women; women as slaves, objects to be possessed, and men as possessors. To begin with, women are 'public property', to be possessed, violated at will. It requires a higher development of man's sense of his own individuality before the idea of permanent possession of women arises. (And here, surely, language is very revealing. It is said

that a man 'possesses' a woman when he sleeps with her; but never vice versa. In this one word is contained the whole idea of woman as a mere thing, a possession.)

What is being argued is not that the subjugation of women arises from some inherent male aggressiveness; but rather that this is the primary form in which man seeks recognition. While the woman, by biological fiat, is compelled to recognise the other's humanity and to depend on his volition as to whether he will recognise her or not, the man is bound by no such requirement. It is important to emphasise that the essential element is the desire for recognition, which here takes the form of domination, of compelling the other to concede recognition and thus of negating the other's autonomy as a human being. Ultimately it is a most inadequate form, for the recognition is accorded not by another who is in turn recognised as a human being but by a thing, a slave.

If this is correct, then it becomes much easier to explain why women have, until very recent times, accepted their subordinate status. To be reduced to the status of the possession of one man may constitute a denial of one's full humanity, but it certainly carries many advantages. As owner, he has obligations as well as rights - first and foremost, the obligation to protect the woman from other predators. On the side of society, too, it is recognised that this woman, by virtue of belonging to one man, cannot be violated at will by others without fear of punishment. Secondly, within this stable set-up, however lop-sided it is, some degree of human affection is possible between the partners, and between them and their children or at least the woman and her children. These are compensations. So she accepts defeat. Here we have a situation far more complex than Hegel's Master/Slave dialectic, some of the premises of which are distinctly dubious, although uncritically accepted by de Beauvoir. To begin with, the assumption that the Slave gives up the fight because of the unwillingness to risk life, while the Master wins because he is prepared to risk his life. Here, on the contrary, the woman gives up precisely because she does not wish to lose what Hegel might call her 'honour', i.e. she does not wish to be subjected to a process of humiliation and dehumanisation worse than death. And secondly, we may question the assumption that to risk one's life in order to kill, rape, torture, plunder and enslave, as in war - i.e. in order to destroy and degrade life - is really more human than to risk one's life in order to give, preserve and protect life. For women are certainly capable of fighting to the death, or working and starving themselves to death, to protect the lives of those they love. It appears, at least, that de Beauvoir's equation of killing with risk of life is questionable. Yet the real loss of humanity involved for women in acceptance of their subjugation cannot be ignored either; the abandonment of ^{the development of} most of their capacities is a devaluation and mutilation of their individualities which produces its own special neuroses and distorted expressions of love - love as possessiveness of husband and children, slavish docility, an attempt to live a vicarious life through the male members of the family.

It is important to stress that we are here talking not about the historical origins but the roots of women's oppression. In other words, this element underlies all oppression of women up to the present, although the oppression itself may take different forms in different epochs, and in a class society may take different forms for women of different classes. Just as ruling class power embodied in the state is not at all times experienced as naked coercion, the subjugation of women may not for long periods be felt as brutal oppression. Nonetheless we found this element underlying many more subtle and insidious forms of oppression.

Very early, then, a certain role is allotted to women as a consequence of their biological difference from men. The same biological fact makes them an object of desire, the captive whose desire is desired, and an instrument of production of the most fundamental element of production - labour-power. Around these functions an institution grows up - the family. The second question we asked was: what is the location of the family within a materialist conception of history?

All societies, from the most primitive to the most advanced, must reproduce human life; hence in each society some specific social relations of human reproduction, a specific form of the family, must exist. The reproduction of human life is simultaneously the reproduction of social relations of production through the reproduction of the individuals between whom those relations are formed, and the production of labour-power which enters as an element into the process of production. In all societies of relative scarcity, and especially in those where labour-power is a dominant element in production, there arises the necessity for social control over women who are the reproducers of labour-power. It is evident, then, that the social relations of human reproduction, kinship and family relationships, are linked to the social relations of production and that the form of the family is determined by the relations of production. We concluded that any definition of the mode of production must account for the relations of human reproduction and their link with the relations of production.

The domination of women now becomes a more complex affair. Initially it was undertaken in order to ensure a captive source of recognition for the man's individuality; but this very act gives him control over the production of labour-power, the most important means of production. This control in turn is a source of social recognition, recognition by society as someone of worth and value. There is a distinction between these two forms of recognition, although they are interdependent. Suppose, for example, that X is an excellent musician, who for some reason suffers a paralysis and can no longer perform. For the public who admired his performances he may cease to exist; but there is something in his personality, an inner core, which survives this loss, and for someone who loves him 'for his own sake' he certainly would not have ceased to exist. Conversely, if his performances have been recorded, he may continue to get social recognition long after he is dead. But someone who loved him can no longer recognise his individuality, because as a person he has ceased to exist. For a living individual, both forms of recognition are essential. Lacking individual recognition in a close personal relationship or relationships, he or she becomes a complex of social attributes - citizen, doctor, athlete, carpenter, mechanic, entertainer, or whatever - but without any centre which can integrate these attributes into a single personality. And since consciousness of oneself is dependent on recognition by the other, the self will also be cognised as a disintegrated self. This will inevitably reflect back in a negative fashion on the individual's contribution to society as a whole. On the other hand, for an individual to express and gain recognition for all his or her capacities within one or a few relationships is impossible; many capacities require a wider social context for expression at all, and lacking this, simply will not develop. An individual deprived of this wider social context will thus likewise be crippled, and the sense of loss of oneself which results from this crippling must inevitably distort and corrode all close personal relationships.

Social recognition is accorded to individuals for some supposed or real contribution to society, and two major forms have existed historically: the performance of labour, which results in the production of a service or a material product; and the ownership of property, which, if separated from labour-power, becomes a condition for the performance of labour. In all societies where labour-power is the dominant element in production, control over its production - i.e. control over women - would be an important source of social recognition and power (e.g. tribal societies where women and grain - means of reproduction and subsistence - were in the control of elders). Here, too, it is important to note, is a different form of achieving recognition through domination, social status as power, control over other human beings.

Once again, where does this leave women? On one side their subordination is necessary in order to guarantee individual or personal recognition to the male half of society; on the other side their subordination is also necessary in order to ensure social control over the production of labour power as an essential means of production. When these two sides come together, they neatly trap women in a cage. But - and this is an important consideration - it is a gilded cage. So long as she produces children to the required extent and in the

required manner, so long as she single-mindedly recognises the man she has accepted as her Lord and Master, so long as she cares for and looks after the whole family, she is adulated and idealised as the repository of all virtue and honour, goodness and beauty, the conscience of society, selfless devotion, and so on and so forth. Even though this hardly counts as recognition of her individuality, it is still better than nothing. Challenge this role, however, and she runs the risk of the most brutal punishment - being burned as a witch, perhaps, or gang-raped, a form of punishment which we found has been used both in the most primitive tribal societies and in contemporary capitalist societies. It is not surprising, then, that most women do not challenge; they accept the role, and the necessary crippling of their capacities and personalities that goes with it. An example of this is the vast number of love-poems written by men to women, extolling their beauty, goodness, etc., and the relatively insignificant number of such poems written by women to men, although love is supposed to be their sole end and aim in life. The point is that a love-poem, although addressed to an individual, is a social form of expression; and women, although they are expected to express love in their person, are not encouraged to express themselves in a wider social context. Their creativity must adapt and limit itself to expression within the confines of the family. This exposes the admiration they are accorded as admiration for some treasured article of property like a fine work of art. The relationship of possession in marriage is once again underlined in the fact that marital rape is not considered to be a possibility: clearly, one cannot steal one's own property.

Oppression Under Capitalism and the Feminist Movement

The fundamental relation of ^{production of} bourgeois society is that between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. The relations of reproduction must therefore reproduce these two basic classes; that is, they must produce human individuals belonging to these classes, and therefore constitute a system of human relationships within which they can be produced. (For the moment we left out of consideration intermediate and disintegrating strata.) This, then, is the function of the family in bourgeois society. This discussion raised many questions. Two basic questions seem to be involved. (1) What is the adequate form of the family in the capitalist mode of production? (2) Is it identical in the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?

The bourgeoisie, according to the Communist Manifesto, tears away the sentimental veil from the family, and reduces all relationships to relations of cash. In tearing away the individual from all bonds of a communal nature, capitalism does not spare the family community; the war of each against all of bourgeois society is the war of the lone individual against all other lone individuals. All relationships are mediated through the universal mediator, money; and all individuals, relating to one another and to society through money, are equal. The ideal tendency of bourgeois relations of reproduction, therefore, is towards the destruction of all sentiment within such relationships and their reduction to the exchange of equivalent for equivalent, i.e. sex for sex or sex for money. Children are the heaviest losers in this system; having nothing of value to exchange, and no means of struggling for their own individual interests, they are inevitably pushed to the margins of society, and only tolerated even there because they perpetuate the race. A magnified and more comprehensive boarding-school system would perhaps be the most adequate form of bourgeois child-upbringing. As for the principle of inheritance, the inheritance of power was already being challenged by bourgeois thought in the eighteenth century, and there is no reason to believe that the inheritance of property by relatives/absolute necessity in a world of share capital and public property; at any rate, the perpetuation of capitalist property can easily be conceived of even without such a system. Conversely, property itself is often an agency in breaking bonds of sentiment within the bourgeois family (one need only think of the bitter struggles over property which are well known to occur within such families).

Obviously the existence of such relationships on a large scale in their extreme individualistic form is unthinkable. This is

because social relations of reproduction are also human relations, relations within which human beings seek recognition of their value as individuals. There is surely a contradiction inherent in bourgeois individualism: individuality is sought to be expressed in the form of individualism which is precisely a form in which it can never be realised because it negates the other, whose recognition is the condition of self-consciousness, consciousness of one's own individuality. Yet this tendency is perhaps what is at work in the progressive dissolution of all community ties, including those of the family, in bourgeois society. At least, we can question the idea that the nuclear family is the adequate form of the bourgeois family.

In the proletarian family, it was agreed, there existed the material basis for superior human relations in the absence of property and the constant struggle against capitalist exploitation; but how exactly these manifested themselves was not clear. One thing seems to be apparent: that the relations in a proletarian family cannot be relations of competition, of a war between the individuals in it. The very survival of the proletariat depends on the limiting of competition within it, and this is more than a formal matter: a sense of solidarity and comradeship is an essential emotional condition for the proletarian struggle. If these were to be eroded at their most vital point, the results could be drastic. This is perhaps the source of the violent opposition initially offered by male workers to the entry of female workers into the labour-force as competitors with them on the labour market, thus bringing competition into the family itself. This opposition takes a reactionary form at first; but the impulse behind it is as much a resistance to the break-up of human relationships which offer some emotional sustenance, as an effort by the men to preserve a hierarchical family structure. If only the latter element were involved, it would be impossible to explain why proletarian women also seek to perpetuate the family, sometimes going through struggle and hardship in order to do so. They would not so easily become deluded victims of 'bourgeois ideology' unless it in some way, however inadequately, met their own needs. When we discussed this question it became apparent that in withdrawing from the wage-labour force, women workers were not merely a passive object of technological change, pressure from their menfolk or bourgeois ideology; rather that this, like absenteeism, was a form of protest against the alienation of factory labour, the extra burden it constitutes for them, as well as a positive assertion of their concern for their children's welfare. The major factor seemed to be that in housework, however back-breaking, protracted, boring and isolated the work itself, they could see the products of their labour doing some good to people they cared about, instead of being sold on an impersonal market for the profit of an oppressive employer.

In fact, an examination of the history of the working class shows that it was the bourgeoisie who uprooted and tore apart the proletarian family, and the proletarians, both male and female, who won it back through struggle. Having been forced to concede it, as they were forced to concede trade unions, the bourgeoisie then proceeded to make use of the family, as it also made use of the trade unions as a means of controlling the working class struggle. Perhaps they did even more. It is possible that it used the form of the family won by the proletariat as a model for its own relations of reproduction. The nuclear family would then be a much more complex phenomenon than simply the bourgeois form of the family. It would be the form of the family won by the proletariat under conditions of capitalist production (e.g. mobility of labour-power), and then incorporated and institutionalised by bourgeois society. It would be an example of the way in which the proletariat, even though as yet incapable of achieving a revolutionary transformation of society, nonetheless acts as a subject of history, leaving its mark on bourgeois society even while it is shaped by that society.

The family in capitalist society has a measure of stability inasmuch as it reproduces the classes of that society and provides personal recognition for one half (the male half) of that society. But it comes under attack long before capitalist relations of production themselves begin to disintegrate. This attack has come

from the feminist movement, whose birth takes place under capitalism. Why?

This question we could not adequately answer, although some tentative ideas were put forward. The development of the productive forces under capitalism has two important consequences for women. Firstly, the development of effective methods of birth control, which has released them from almost continuous childbearing throughout their years of maximum activity. With this has come the recognition that a condition which appeared to be natural, ordained by God, is in fact a matter of human choice. With the possibility of control over their own bodies in this area has come the demand for such control, which no amount of religious bigotry has succeeded in stopping. With the greater part of their lives freed from childbearing, the idea that this alone is the natural function of women ceases to have any material basis.

Simultaneously the enormous development of the productivity of labour under capitalism for the first time makes labour-power a subordinate element of production. As the creator of surplus value it of course still plays a crucial role; but in terms of quantity, the need for it diminishes with each technological advance. After the major periods of primitive accumulation are over, there is not so much a shortage of labour-power as a surfeit of it: the necessity for social control over reproduction in order to ensure an adequate supply of labour-power disappears. Just when women become capable of controlling their reproductive functions, society ceases to need to compel them to do otherwise. Conversely, the periodic necessity for capitalism, especially in the early stages, to incorporate large masses of women into the wage-labour force, undermines from another side the idea that the role of women is exclusively in the sphere of reproduction. In these developments, perhaps, can be found the material basis for the development of the feminist movement.

The feminist movement is directed against the inadequacies of the bourgeois social relations of reproduction; but it attacks these from different standpoints. There was a problem in identifying different currents within the feminist movement. If the criterion used is the method of struggle, the main divisions appear to be between an individual, existential mode of struggle through an attempt to create new types of personal relationships, and a political mode of struggle. Alternatively, if the criterion is the goal of the struggle, then the main distinction would be between bourgeois and socialist goals, and within these there could be attempts to change relationships between individuals as well as attempts to change relationships between or within social classes. If we provisionally adopt the latter, we could tentatively divide the feminist movement into two major currents - revolutionary and bourgeois - although in any movement both currents may be closely intertwined.

Bourgeois feminism which adopts political methods is aimed mainly at the achievement of equality of women within bourgeois society. Its major demands have been that women should have equal political rights (right to vote and stand for election), equal rights to the ownership of property (and thus also to the exploitation of the labour-power of others), right to work and equal wages (i.e. the right to sell one's labour-power and be exploited to the same extent as men), and equal opportunities for getting an education, jobs, etc. It appeared that this movement could both advance and hinder the achievement of socialist goals and the interests of women. For example, the right to employment and the right to vote could result in the growth of confidence, consciousness and self-activity amongst women; but the right to equal exploitation which meant abandoning demands for special protection for female labour, and the right to serve the nation and make equal sacrifices for it in time of war, injured the interests of the working class as a whole, and especially the female portion of it. Assessing this current from the standpoint of the total emancipation of women is therefore a complex matter; one cannot simply write off the movement as bourgeois and therefore useless, nor can one adopt a simple stagist view that it necessarily precedes and leads

to the further development of a revolutionary feminist movement.

The existentialist attempts to achieve the same goal have ranged from de Beauvois-type attempts to discover new forms of relationships between individuals (no marriage, no children), to the extreme solutions of radical feminists like Shulamith Firestone who see the solution in the complete cutting-off of stable human relations between men and women, reproduction and childcare reduced to purely technical functions, and so on. Here the problem that is sought to be resolved is the crippling of the individuality of women which inevitably occurs under the existing system of relationships. But the solution is seen in terms of female individualism which is opposed to male individualism. As in the case of bourgeois feminism which takes a political form, the premises of bourgeois relationships is taken for granted, so that equality is the equality to compete; in the bourgeois war of each against all, it is assumed that the assertion of individuality must be at the expense of other individuals. The inevitable conclusion must be sex war.

A thorough analysis of these movements would be necessary before any definitive evaluation of them can be made. But it appears that from such a standpoint the emancipation of women can never be achieved. For if the problem is one of recognition, then the achievement of a competitive equality is no solution. Women may achieve the same degree of social recognition as men - which is in any case very limited for the vast majority - but by refusing to concede personal recognition to men, they do not thereby gain it for themselves. At best they can return to an original state where institutionalised forms of domination have been eliminated and only brute force can subjugate them. This is perhaps the condition that exists in America, where equality for women has progressed far, women form almost half of the labour force, millions of women beat their husbands, and yet women are daily subjected to the most brutal assaults. However much they arm themselves against such assaults, the threat of them must always be there, and with it the danger of being overcome by superior force.

Thus two criticisms can tentatively be made of bourgeois feminism. Firstly, that its tendency is towards pure individualism, and in this direction there can be no solution to the problem of recognition, neither social nor personal, which we found to be at the root of the oppression of women. Secondly that it views the problem from the standpoint still of a concealed male chauvinism. The effort is directed towards making women the same as men; in this effort it is overlooked that some of the values that go into the definition of 'masculinity' may well need to be rejected by men and women alike (e.g. aggressiveness, competitive individualism); likewise that some of the values which are supposed to be 'feminine' are in fact human qualities which should be common to both men and women. Thus they negate the contribution which women can and have made to human culture. The love of children, for example. Marx once said that he could forgive Christianity all its sins because of the love of children which it introduced into human culture. But at this day, this is by and large considered to be a feminine attribute. To assert it as a human quality is to acknowledge one aspect of the contribution women have, despite tremendous disadvantages, made to human culture. To seek to eliminate it from women and from human culture is implicitly to accept the values of a male-dominated, achievement-oriented, commodity society, where human qualities which neither win fame nor make money are considered to be inferior or useless. Only on some such assumption could radical feminists characterise child-rearing as animal activity - presumably implying that children are little animals who could just as well be brought up in menageries. Paradoxically, then, this current of feminism asserts that women can become human only by ceasing to be women, by rejecting female sexuality, mutilating themselves in a different way, becoming female eunuchs. In its essence it is therefore anti-female and anti-human, and makes no contribution to the abolition of the dehumanised relationships which lie at the root of the oppression of women, but rather takes them to their logical conclusion.

The movements which have grown up around the demand for abortion, protests against rape and wife-beating, demands for the recognition

of the social importance of housework, are potentially revolutionary although revolutionary goals may not explicitly be stated. The demand for abortion, although it may itself be met within bourgeois society, is in fact an assertion of the right to control one's own body which in bourgeois society is constantly violated, sometimes systematically and outrageously as in the case of torture and rape, which we felt were closely linked, perpetrated through the state (police and army). Thus all these demands - free abortion, no rape, no wife-beating - point towards a system of human relationships free from coercion and domination even if this aim is not consciously articulated.

The Proletariat and Feminism

The recent importance being given by Marxists to the significance of housework perhaps expresses an increasing opposition on the part of working class housewives to this specific form of oppression. Although this cannot be seen as the root of their oppression, yet it is an important form in which oppression is experienced, as well as constituting the material link in bourgeois society between relations of production and relations of reproduction, and hence clarification of the relations involved is a necessary task for Marxists. The socially necessary and value-creating character of housework establishes on a scientific basis the roots of this domestic slavery in capitalist production relations; and the demand for wages for housework, however we assess it, at least expresses an awareness that this is a social problem which cannot be resolved on an atomised basis (e.g. sharing of housework between men and women). The question as to why so many processes of production closely connected with reproduction have remained unsocialised was not resolved, although it was pointed out that partial socialisation has taken place - e.g. schools, laundries, processed foods, etc. An answer may lie in the large portion of unpaid labour which can be concealed in housework, as well as the necessarily labour-intensive nature of the work involved. Both of these factors, as Marx pointed out in Capital, make it less profitable for capitalists to produce the same goods and services by means of wage-labour engaged in large-scale production. If this is the case, the demand for more wages for housework (for some wages are already provided in means of subsistence) may be one of the most effective means of obtaining socialisation of housework, since the history of trade unionism has shown that an increase in wages is one of the major motive forces pushing capitalists to rationalise production. But the question remains: how would it be possible to fight for such a demand or related demands, given the isolated nature of the housewife's labour?

There are two reasons given for the generally low level of militancy among women, and although they are often assimilated to one another, it is important to distinguish them. One is that the nature of household labour, the fact that it is carried out in isolation, makes it impossible for housewives to develop a collective consciousness or participate in social struggles except as appendages of their menfolk who engage in socialised production. This idea stems from a conception which sees class consciousness as determined by the nature of the labour process. Thus housewives can achieve only a family consciousness, since their labour is confined to the family; workers can achieve a collective consciousness, but one which is confined to the corporate group to which they belong - workplace or trade union, thus trade union consciousness, syndicalism. The logical conclusion of this conception, which was asserted by Kautsky and emphatically repeated by Lenin in What is to be Done, is that the working class cannot, by its own efforts, achieve class consciousness or revolutionary consciousness. It is only the bourgeois intelligentsia, by virtue of its own mental labour-process dealing with abstractions like society, state, production and classes, which can achieve a revolutionary consciousness which they then inject into the proletariat. This is a fundamentally false conception of class consciousness, which remains at the level of the most superficial determinants of consciousness and fails to comprehend how consciousness develops through the striving to understand struggles whose nature is determined by the totality of social relations and not simply

by relations in the workplace. Thus it is completely unable to explain important periods of working class history: for example, how it was that one of the most advanced forms of struggle and organisation, the workers' government, was discovered in 1871 by a Paris proletariat consisting largely of small-scale producers with a significant proportion of women, and without the help of a bourgeois intelligentsia giving them class consciousness from outside.

The other reason commonly given is that women, having the responsibility of maintaining the home due to the sexual division of labour, are emotionally far more vulnerable to the hardships of their children, and therefore unwilling to engage in any action which endangers the family welfare and income. This condition would apply not only to housewives, but also to women workers, and appears far more plausible than the first reason. We have reason to believe, for example, that where women are unwilling to go on strike, or to let their husbands go on strike, or act as strike-breakers, the reason is their commitment to the family welfare. Likewise the extent to which they drive themselves on a piece-rate system, sometimes competitively excluding casual workers in the process, is also a function of devotion to their families. They thus act on the interests of a corporate group - the family - without taking into account the interests of the class as a whole, just as for long periods the workers struggle for the interests of a wider corporate group (based on workplace, industry, etc.) without taking into account the interests of the class as a whole. In both cases there is an adaptation to bourgeois individualism, inasmuch as competition between these sub-communities within the working class continues to occur; but also an adaptation of individualism to the needs of the working class, inasmuch as competition within these subcommunities is eliminated. But this is not a static contradiction requiring an external agency (the bourgeois intelligentsia) to break it. Rather, the dynamics of the class struggle itself lead to situations where the apparent contradiction between the interests of particular groups of proletarians and the class as a whole disappears and the entire proletariat is able to constitute itself as a community, a class for itself. And it surely not accidental that it is in such periods that women have been most active, shown the greatest initiative and courage in struggle. At any rate, one of our tasks would be to study such situations from the standpoint not of a theory of class consciousness which views the proletariat as a passive object of bourgeois ideology, but a theory which conceives of the proletariat, including the female portion of it, as conscious subjects struggling to define and achieve their historical tasks. From this standpoint, the struggle of proletarian women to protect the interests of their families takes on an entirely different significance; it is implicitly a struggle to preserve a concern for personal relationships, the love of children, mutual recognition and love, even if it takes on the appearance of passivity, docility or conservatism; it is therefore not to be negated, but transcended and thus preserved in the wider struggle for socialism. Without this contribution, socialism would appear as a society of socialised production in which there is comradeship and solidarity but no love; social recognition for the capacities of an individual, but no recognition for the individual's personality as an integrated totality. This is probably the way in which socialism is conceived of by most proletarian women which is why, possibly, they show little or no interest in struggling for it. The way in which collective struggles in their place of residence (against extortionate rents, eviction, neighbourhood rape, etc.) as well as attempts at cooperation and mutual aid begins to develop a collective consciousness in proletarian housewives which is then further developed as these struggles mesh in with more generalised social struggles - this is a process which has not received even a fraction of the attention it requires. Such a study is necessary in order to understand why certain forms of organisation and struggle - e.g. trade unionism - have by and large received little interest from women, and to identify what forms of organisation and struggle can fully involve them and historically have done so - e.g. the Commune, street committees, soviets, etc.

It is from this standpoint, the standpoint of the proletariat as a conscious subject struggling to constitute itself as a class, that the importance of specifically feminist struggles within the working class (e.g. against wife-beating, rape, the commercial use of the female body, etc.) can be gauged. For the working class family is the sphere where wage-labourers are produced - i.e. not a thing, labour-power, but living individuals in which this labouring capacity is embodied. Hence it is important not only that a mere capacity to labour be reproduced, but that living individuals prepared to accept the system of wage-labour, of factory discipline, of enforced production of surplus value, be reproduced. And here the bourgeoisie has scored a success. Just as it was able to make use of trade unions to limit the class struggle after earlier having been forced to concede the right of combination, it has been able to use the proletarian family, won from it by bitter struggle, as a breeding-place for 'good' proletarians. The hierarchical structure which still exists in proletarian families - not merely because it is dominated by bourgeois ideology, but because the basis for this adaptation to bourgeois ideology exists in the continued search for recognition as domination - reproduces in the most intimate sphere of life the fundamental features of class society. Children who daily see their father giving orders to their mother, who see their father beating their mother and are themselves ill-treated, perhaps by both parents, can only grow up accepting it as a 'fact of life' that human society is inherently hierarchically structured with those above having the right to use and abuse those below them. The authoritarianism of factory and state becomes far more easily acceptable if authoritarianism is seen as an essential element of human relationships as such, and the reduction of human beings to mere embodiments of the commodity labour-power is so much the more credible when they see women being treated as possessions, use-values, objects, commodities, in their own homes and in society at large.

It follows that the acceptance by women of the present situation is a condition for the stability of the capitalist system, while struggles against these forms of oppression in fact strike at the roots of the reproduction of capitalist relations of production and reproduction. As Marx pointed out in relation to the English and Irish workers, it is unconceivable that the proletariat could overthrow the class domination of the bourgeoisie unless it has first eliminated all relationships of domination and subordination within its own ranks. Another way of putting this is to say that the constitution of the proletariat as a human community is the condition of its revolutionary success. So long as proletarians collaborate in suppressing the development of the capacities of other proletarians, they put obstacles in the way of these others participating in the class struggle and thus constituting working class solidarity. At the same time they dehumanise themselves and thus render themselves less capable of struggling against the dehumanisation of bourgeois society. One example of this is the demoralising effect on themselves of the acts of rape and other atrocities committed by the Red Army in Germany. Another is surely wife-beating in the working class and other forms of male chauvinism, even if they are concealed under the cover of revolutionary phraseology. As Engels correctly remarked, in such families the man is the bourgeois, the woman the proletarian. The worker first has to fight the bourgeois in himself if he is to be successful in fighting the bourgeois class. Male chauvinism in the working class, like chauvinism in the working class, is a form in which bourgeois ideology enters the proletariat and dominates it.

The solution to the corporate (family) consciousness of the housewife cannot be the counterposition of another corporate interest (say, that of the factory or trade union), but, rather, its subsumption into a wider class interest which does not oppose but preserves the interest of the family and especially of the children who may not be capable of directly fighting for their own interests. Where such a class interest is not constituted, hostility and suspicion between competing corporate groups, or mutual indifference, can arise. But it is important to understand that this is a contradiction in reality, and not merely a consequence of the backwardness or illusions of the women.

Thus the socialist feminist struggle against dehumanised human relationships, against recognition as domination and for recognition as mutual affirmation, is an integral part of the struggle for socialism, a part without which that struggle cannot be successful; it is also a necessary struggle in the sense that male domination within the working class and passive female acceptance of it come directly into conflict with the tendency of the working class struggle which increasingly demands the solidarity, unity and active participation of the whole class. At the same time, the ultimate emancipation of women cannot be achieved without the abolition of the division of labour and the achievement of communist production, which will allow the full development of the capacities of men and women alike and accord them social recognition, at the same time abolishing class domination, one of whose forms of expression is the rape and torture of the dominated class. The possibility of free expression of all capacities in socialist production and of social recognition of the individuality expressed in those capacities will eliminate the crippling effect of both domestic slavery and wage slavery which is largely responsible for the morbid possessiveness in human relationships which is sought as a substitute. In a society where social recognition is gained not at the expense of others - through competition and domination - but through cooperation and mutual affirmation, any attempt to gain personal recognition through coercion, limiting or robbing the autonomy of the other, would be a contradiction. In bourgeois society, self-affirmation, both in social and in personal relationships, is necessarily at the expense of the other; in personal relations, self-affirmation of the man takes the form of egoism, negation of the other, while affirmation of the other by the woman takes the form of self-sacrifice, negation of the self; in society, self-affirmation takes the form of eliminating others from the competitive struggle, while the only affirmation of the other which is at all possible is the involuntary withdrawal from competition after a defeat - e.g. 'one capitalist always kills many'. The proletarian struggle is directed against this principle in both personal and social relationships, and thus the revolutionary proletariat, which struggles to build a communist society, is the agent of the emancipation of women, and the women within it acquire an especially important role. This much at least can be said, although to attempt any further specification of the form which human relationships will take in a future society is difficult. Some such attempt, however, has to be made, since it is the task of communists to anticipate - not only in theory but also in practice - the relations of a society which has yet to be built.

Women in India

A very brief examination of the condition of proletarian women in India indicated that in terms of living standards and hours and conditions of work they were not far from the level to which women had been reduced by the onset of the industrial revolution; however that this degree of exploitation occurs in the context of an advanced capitalist world economy where it plays a specific function. The part played by the intensive and expensive exploitation not only of wage-labour but also of household labour in reducing the value and price of labour-power is an important element in the development of capitalism in India and needs to be further investigated. Here the relevance of establishing the social character of proletarian household work is once again felt, for unless household labour as well as wage labour is included in the calculation of the working day, the true extent of the exploitation of female labour cannot be grasped.

Another peculiarity was the persistence of family relations characteristic of an earlier mode of production which, although breaking down, has not entirely disappeared. Again, the possibility that because this breakdown occurs not in a period of early capitalism but in the context of an advanced capitalist world economy, it could lead to a stabilisation of certain intermediate forms, cannot be discounted; at least, it is clear that the process of breakdown and reconstitution of the family does not take place in the same form

as in Europe. Conversely, however, bourgeois rights (the right to vote, etc.) have been granted to women in India without a struggle of their own, as a by-product of the struggle for bourgeois rights in other countries. These circumstances may account for the fact that a feminist movement such as arose in Europe and America has never arisen in India, and perhaps may never arise on a large scale; struggles of a bourgeois-democratic character have been short-lived and have never acquired a mass following. Thus a situation exists in which an extremely high degree of exploitation of female labour-power is under-pinned by social relations of reproduction which make it almost impossible for women to struggle effectively without risking social ostracism or worse. At the same time there is strong pressure on them to participate in working class struggles in order to make them more effective, and this pressure particularly comes to the fore at times of intensive working class struggle. At such periods, then, these women would be subject to painfully contradictory pressures: between, on the one hand, their conception of themselves and their role in society which has been instilled into them since childhood and which is reinforced by real concern for their families, and, on the other hand, the militant role they are expected to play on demand, which implies a sacrifice of family interest. A crisis of identity results; since the self is cognised only in relation to the other, the contradictory conceptions of herself which a woman is here presented with must lead to a questioning of her own identity. While this may be a creative contradiction if she is able to discover an identity in a higher level of self-activity than is involved in the role of either home-maker or manipulated support for some outside struggle, it can also be a painful and disorienting experience if such a solution is not found. It is also important to note that this is not a contradiction between individualism and class consciousness; for family consciousness is a form of corporate consciousness which in India often leads to an almost total negation of the interests of the woman, while the alternative that is posed by militant struggle, so long as it is opposed to the interests of women and children, is not yet a class interest either, since it is not the interest of the proletariat as a whole. What the exact effect this contradiction has on the consciousness of women; how this can be resolved; whether struggles have occurred in which women have discovered ways and means of transcending their family interest without negating it, and simultaneously achieved a higher degree of self-identity and self-activity; if so, what form these struggles have taken, and what forms of organisation they have been embodied in - all these questions require answers in order that a systematic perspective be built, and they can be answered only through sensitive discussions and involvement with proletarian women and their struggles.

Conclusions

It is evident that these discussions posed many questions, most of which were answered only very tentatively or not at all. Yet they indicated that the problem of women's oppression and hence the solution to it is a far more complex one than simply a matter of 'equality' and 'economic independence'. Inequality and economic dependence on males are not the cause of oppression, but merely forms in which that oppression is manifested; the roots of oppression lie much deeper, and unless they are discovered and destroyed, the oppression of women will continue despite full employment and formal equality. At the same time the forms of struggle and organisation through which women can fight for their emancipation, the transitional steps they must take, the relation of their struggle to that of other oppressed and exploited groups and to the working class struggle as a whole - all these have to be determined far more concretely than they have been hitherto. Otherwise the assertion that the emancipation of women is inseparable from the socialist revolution remains a mere idea whose truth cannot be proved in practice. The process of resolving these questions is nothing but the elaboration of a revolutionary perspective for women.

WHAT IS REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM? by KURODA, KAN'ICHI (1958)
(published here in abridged form)

(Introductory note on the translation of Kuroda's text by the Anti-Stalinism Study Group:- A few words must be said here to explain the choice of English equivalents selected for some of the special terms used in this book and elsewhere in Kuroda's writings. First of all, one must grasp in outline the methodology. Marx's dialectical method, described by Marx in his "Method of Political Economy", is adopted by Kuroda and developed as an all-embracing methodology. According to Kuroda, the process of human cognition (and the process of the evolution and application of theory) by the thinking and acting human subject goes first in a descending direction, i.e., from the concrete sense-data, through two stages (phenomenal theory and substantial theory), to abstract, universal theory. This is the level of essential theory (honshitsu-ron). After having arrived at a formulation of universal essential theory, one proceeds in the opposite, ascending direction. That is, on the basis of the essential theory which has already been established, one evolves special stadial (stage) theory corresponding to the present stage, and finally, specific real (or reality) theory. The special stadial theory and specific reality theory taken together are called "phenomenal pattern theories". These theories are understood to be the various theories derived in the ascending process from universal eidetics as one proceeds towards applying essential theory to immediate reality. (The descending process is also referred to as "analysis", while the ascending process is called "synthesis".)

This dialectical process of human cognition (and of the evolution and application of theory) is grasped as embracing both epistemology and ontology, and as containing also the science of logic. This Marxian dialectics, outlined here in the simplest possible terms, is dealt with in somewhat greater detail in Kuroda's books "The Logic of Formation of Marxism" (in Japanese) and "The Quest of Contemporary Materialism" (Japanese). The entire range of ideas underlying the philosophy is treated in his voluminous "Hegel and Marx" (Japanese). Chapter 3 of the present book ("What is the contemporary unfolding of Marxism?" /reproduced below/) is a succinct statement of the process of evolution and application of theory and deserves the closest study.

To return now to a consideration of the terminology, let us take up first the word honshitsu-ron. The word has been translated here sometimes as "essential theory" and sometimes as "eidetics" (the latter term is borrowed from Husserl, who uses it in the sense of "science of the essence", "science of essential being", Wesenswissenschaft). The term "principle theory" (genri-ron), derived from the economics of Uno Kōzō, is also applied sometimes to universal eidetics.

The word bashoteki ("locational") also poses considerable difficulties. The word is the adjectival form of the noun basho, which means simply "place" or "location". The "location" is understood as being the material world containing the two conflicting moments, the object and the subject. Basho is a key concept in the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō. Kuroda distinguishes between the bashoteki benshōhō ("the dialectics of location") and kateiteki benshōhō ("the dialectics of process") and speaks often of the bashoteki tachiba ("locational standpoint"). The dialectics of location has to do with grasping an object according to logical (ideational) principles, while the dialectics of process is that connected with a historical (consecutive) grasp. A correct grasp of reality must combine both the logical and historical aspects in their distinction and correlation.

The "subjective standpoint" (shutaiteki tachiba) is often alluded to. Kuroda links "subjectivity" (shutaisei) with the praxis-oriented standpoint (jissenteiki tachiba). It is a mistake to seek solutions for problems by confining them only to the internal aspects of the human being, since the problems to be solved are raised in the objective sense. The "contradictions" between the environment and the human being cannot be really solved by merely eliminating spiritual defects within the human being. The real solution of such "objective contradictions" can be attained only by bringing about revolutionary change (henkaku) in these "contradictions" between the environment and the human being. "It is not enough merely to remake the internal aspects of the human being; it is necessary to act on the environment surrounding the human being and to remake it in the manner desired by the human being. Rather than looking on passively, it is necessary, on the contrary, to act positively /on the environment/. This attitude of revolutionary change of the environment is the praxis-oriented standpoint, and it is here that the subjectivity of the human being is established. Subjectivity means precisely this sort of positiveness or activeness of the human being, the standpoint of praxis aimed at revolutionary change" (Kuroda, Shakaikan no tankyu). Thus, the "subjective standpoint" means in general terms the standpoint of the active, self-conscious human subject carrying out revolutionary change, of the thinking, active human subject realizing historical tasks locationally at the present time.

The present time in which the historical subject acts is referred to as the "active present" (kōiteiki genzai), that is, the historical present tense, the time of present activity which includes within itself past, present and future. The history of society, according to Kuroda, is always created locationally at the active present. The fundamental laws of society do not exist apart from the historical patterns of social production, but are present as the "Eternal Now" (eien no ima) which is at the root of the multifarious historical patterns and are constantly being realised in the present tense by human creative acts. Historically, really, and hence locationally also, the very genesis of society is precisely in the locational creation at each active present.

In Kuroda's writings, the term "substance" (jittai) always refers to the social entities or individuals which act and play roles in the unfolding historical processes. A social class, an individual, or an organization may be a "substance" in this sense. The Japanese verb norikoeru is translated as "transcend". The term refers to the process by which the revolutionary communist movement locationally overcomes (transcends, surmounts) in theory, in organization, and in the actual movement as a whole, the established (Stalinist or Social-Democratic) "left"-wing movements and establishes itself in place of them as the true revolutionary vanguard of the working class. The concept of norikoe is the very essence of the organizational tactics of the Japanese Revolutionary Marxist movement. The Japanese word corresponding to the German Aufhebung (shiyō) is translated here consistently as "sublation". "Equationism" (tadamono-shugi) is an over-simplified, direct identification of facts with theory in which theory (or thought) is directly equated with the development of objective existence itself. Finally, Japanese names are given with the surname first, followed by the given name, in the native fashion.....

Anti-Stalinism Study Group)

Publications of Kuroda and the Japanese group can be obtained by contacting Larry Moyes, 715 Tenth Avenue, San Francisco, California, 94118, U.S.A.

Inside the Japanese Trotskyist Association /Fourth International/, it appears that two different organisational tactics are being considered. One is based on the fact of the irredeemable degeneration of the established parties (the Stalinist party and the Social-Democratic party); it is a tendency towards establishing a new Communist party (a Trotskyist party) outside of these established parties and towards gradually rallying dissatisfied elements and opposition factions around it. To the other tendency belong those who want to establish on the outside a command headquarters for ideological struggles and political struggles. On the one hand, the struggle policies laid down by this command headquarters are to be applied in the mass movement to revolutionize it, while on the other hand the policies are to be taken directly inside the parties of the Stalinists and Social Democrats, in this way moving them as a whole in a direction which would bring about their transformation (transformation of the parties themselves by means of the creation and rallying of a Left Opposition inside the established parties). In this way, they hope to establish a new Communist Party. If the former can be called a snowman-type tactics, the latter may be called a rush-in type tactics.

Under conditions such as those applying in this country, where the creation and rallying of the revolutionary opposition is still weak, to adopt exclusively the former type of organisational tactics is not only unrealistic, it is even impossible. This is so because such an organisation would be subject to an extremely great possibility that by becoming a small elite organisation, it would inevitably fall into sectarianism. Furthermore, rather than the subversion it would receive from the police power of the enemy class, it would be subject to increased provocations and regressions from the Stalinist bureaucrats and their lackeys. Therefore, it is possible that it would be nipped in the bud before it was able to strengthen and expand its nuclear organisations. The second organisational tactics, called the rush-in type, are basically more realistic than the first type of organisational tactics. We must basically adopt this organisational tactic. However, this alone would be quite insufficient.

We revolutionary communists, who believe firmly that the revolutionary struggles cannot be pressed forward without overthrowing the Stalinist party and its bureaucrats who are constantly inhibiting and betraying the liberation struggles of the working class, have at the same time another urgent duty, that of adopting united front tactics. We have aims other than that of merely creating and rallying a true Left Opposition. At the same time, we must co-operate with all opposition forces who are dissatisfied with the central leadership and are resisting it. We must take united action with them or form united fronts with them in order to effectively realize our immediate aims. To forget about questions of united fronts and united actions for the realization of common goals, and to make a goal in itself out of rallying and strengthening nuclear organisations as a means for realizing aims -- this is nothing but standing on one's head.

Why Must a United Front be Formed?

Among our Trotskyists, there are some who do not agree that the chief organisational tactics for the time being must be the formation of a broad united front of the Opposition aiming at overthrow of the Japanese CP Mainstream and the realization of united actions. They adopt the standpoint that such a united front of anti-Stalinists would be worthless unless it was based on the "purity" of Trotskyists as its nucleus. That is, they adopt the standpoint that in the broad coalition of the Opposition, one ought to pose the question: "What is the basis of solidarity?" and that anti-Stalinism cannot be made the basis. Thus, raiding tactics are naturally taken with regard to the Opposition faction, and there necessarily results a tendency to limit the "rallying of the Left

Opposition" to the creation of a collective of one-hundred-percent-or-more Trotskyists, and to make this a goal in itself. This is the reason why the sectarianism of the Trotskyists becomes inevitable, while at the same time rapid growth of the organisation is impeded.

Generally speaking, it is necessary to form a united front and to engage in united actions because of the relative weakness of the nuclear substance which is attempting to realize a definite goal. On account of this weakness, the formation of a united front and joint struggles are required of necessity. However, if one were to begin by establishing a priori a "criterion for solidarity" (in actuality, Trotskyism), this would be to put the cart before the horse. Here there is a rudimentary aberration concerning organisational tactics on the part of the self-styled Trotskyists. As long as they ignore political collaboration for realizing victoriously common goals and begin by imposing ideological frameworks in advance, our Trotskyists cannot possibly co-operate with anyone except pure Trotskyists, and the natural result is that they are driven into the predicament of having to maintain their existence permanently on a one-man one-party principle. This is not unrelated to the fact that they refuse to adopt a practical standpoint of advancing together with their revolutionary comrades struggling to break out of the morass of Stalinism, but on the contrary adopt a backward-looking stance of trying to raise these others up to the level of Trotskyism.

The sectarianism of the self-styled Trotskyists reveals itself in concentrated form in the fact that our Trotskyists, claiming that they defend Trotsky's theory of the "degenerated workers' state", can do nothing more than display hostility towards those who deny this theory and who define the contemporary USSR in terms of bureaucratic state capitalism, red imperialism, or bureaucratic collectivism (hereafter let us call these latter - Trotskyist factions, or revisionist Trotskyists). It is absolutely impossible to carry on a revolutionary communist movement with the infantile sensibility which makes them say: "Since we have the duty of preventing, at whatever cost, Trotskyism from being confused with anti-Sovietism or anti-communism, we ought not to take united actions with adherents of the concept of red imperialism". Nothing could be more stupid than to 'fear' that Trotskyism might be confused with red imperialism. Generally speaking, a revolutionary political movement is on the phenomenal level (although not on the essential level) something extremely unclear and full of misunderstandings. It is most essential to realize the paradoxical fact that politics itself cannot be sublated unless one makes use of even political, all-too political "intrigues" (in this, no revolutionary can surpass Lenin). Therefore, one ought to engage in the "intrigue" of making use even of the red imperialists / ie, the factions calling Russia red-imperialist / to help in the task of driving to collapse the JCP leadership, which finds itself in a maelstrom of wavering and confusion. If we are unable to take advantage of the ideological and organisational collapse of the Stalinists and bring about a forward-moving rallying and uniting in the direction of revolutionary communism, and should there occur a situation in which the movement was taken in the direction of / factions defending the theory of / red imperialism, then this would be nothing but our own defeat as revolutionary communists, and it would merely prove that our ideological struggles today are ineffective. However, we absolutely do not anticipate the occurrence of such a situation, and we will carry out energetic theoretical struggles to prevent it. If we were so afraid of being contaminated by red imperialism that we could do nothing but try to isolate it from the very beginning, this would make it absolutely impossible to realize the revolution, even though it would certainly enable us to defend to the death the purity of Trotskyism. Like our Trotskyists, the revisionist Trotskyists also abandon the revolutionary movement and engross themselves in compiling collections of quotations from the classics of Marx and Lenin; they can do nothing but to jeer at the "rebellion without a cause" of the "little Trotskyists". Thus, both of them appear to be fated to go down to their inevitable downfall as Trotskyist factions together with the Stalinists.

Unlike our sectarians, who are fated to go to their ruin in this manner, we must "permanently" enlarge revolutionary nuclear organisations and realize the revolution. This will be possible only by rallying a united front for the realisation of our immediate struggle tactics and common goals (but not a common ideological basis), or by engaging in united actions. In this case, political compromises are necessary. In fact, they are even inevitable. However, even though we are besmeared with mud in the political sense, we will be able to prove practically our correctness after the struggle has been completed. It is necessary to arm ourselves theoretically, to evince our revolutionary caution to the maximum degree, while struggling courageously, fearing nothing. If we merely keep our hands clean, neither we nor the others will perhaps be injured, but there will be an even greater danger that we will hardly be able to increase the number of comrades, and we will be destined to remain for all time a sectarian faction.

We should remember that "Advance separately, strike in unison!" is a saying of Lenin inherited by Trotsky the revolutionary in his What next? To use Trotskyism as one's only criterion for making value judgements and to refuse to engage in united actions or united fronts, hiding behind the shield of a "criterion for solidarity", as do the so-called Trotskyists, is even to rebel against Trotsky himself. This sort of conservative standpoint of today's Japanese Trotskyists must be discarded without delay, for as the revolutionary organisation expands, this may even come to play a reactionary role. Our revolutionary movement must be realized immediately in the form of carrying out united actions aimed at the struggle goals at each definite time. The centre of the problem is to strengthen and enlarge the united front through carrying out united actions. The centre of the problem is not in basing oneself on any definite set of ideas or concepts held in common. Naturally, this does not preclude intense theoretical struggles inside the united front, nor does it mean any dilution of ideology. The fact that they can only fear this merely serves to prove the conservative and reactionary nature of those Trotskyists who are unable to free themselves from absolutization of Trotskyism as the "criterion for solidarity".

Destroy Dogmatism and Sectarianism!

Theoretically, at the base of the organisational tactics and defects of the Japanese Trotskyists lies their absolutization of Trotsky and of his ideology. There are lurking dogmatists who seek to defend to the death Trotsky and Trotskyism. A backward-looking attitude of regarding Trotskyism as an absolute and making it the only criterion for making value judgements is present as a tacit presupposition. As a result, our Trotskyists fall into sectarianism in political practice, and Trotskyist factions (or subfactions within factions) tend to become fixed and rigidly absolutized. At the same time, their misery over their own sectarian nature results in a constantly expanded reproduction of their own intense sectarianism. This sort of sectarianism in practice is actually the necessary result of dogmatism in theory, is in fact an actual manifestation of such dogmatism.

We revolutionary communists must declare that we clearly and openly break with this sort of Trotsky dogmatism, the dogmatism of Trotskyist factions. We do so because we have adopted the practical standpoint of clearly recognizing the achievements, the defects, and the errors of Trotsky and Trotskyism. On this basis, we assign to them their correct position in the line of development of Marxism and apply them to living reality. Through this process, we must at the same time transcend and go beyond them. Such a subjective, practical standpoint is completely lacking in our Trotskyists. They do not regard Trotsky and Trotskyism as something which ought to be assimilated critically and developed further. Rather, they merely swallow them whole uncritically and follow them blindly as the major premise for engaging in a political movement. For this reason, they naturally take an attitude of refusing to engage even in positive investigations of what might be called the "flaws" of Trotsky. Their only concern is simply to take Trotskyism exactly

as they find it and to apply (or really misapply) it to this country. As long as they attempt to apply theory to historical reality, rather than merely toying with it as theory, we evaluate their praxis highly. But at the same time we must criticise them for the fact that our Trotskyists belittle or neglect the reciprocal dialectics between theory and application; that is, the dialectics by which, through the application of theory, the applied theory itself is also tempered and developed. (This naturally includes the use of application to check out theory and to locate errors.) Precisely because this fact is not realized, there arises a new dogmatism, in which Trotsky is merely substituted for Stalin.

On account of this sort of Trotsky dogmatism, there is established unconsciously the categorical imperative dictating that the Left Opposition must be armed from head to toes with Trotskyism, and this must necessarily manifest itself in practice as sectarianism. Thus, there results necessarily the decisive error: neglect or ignorance of political dynamics in Opposition activities. Furthermore, it was precisely such an error which was also the fatal defect of Trotsky himself before he founded the Fourth International. In the struggle for the Russian Revolution, Trotsky was able to do nothing but take a position as a mediator with the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, in the struggle with Stalin after Lenin's death, Trotsky was defeated (the miserable splits and repression of the "Joint Opposition", the unorganised, apolitical nature of the struggle of the Left Opposition). In other words, all of this has to do with Trotsky's decisive weaknesses, defects, and errors in organisation theory. We must today take full advantage of this vital lesson; otherwise, the so-called Trotskyists will destroy their own future with their own hands. In spite of this, their reflection on this point is extremely weak. An important problem is lurking here.

Of course, some will say that Trotsky surpassed Lenin in theory in some ways, and that actually Lenin was guided in his movements by Trotsky's brains, that what ought to be called the defects of Trotsky were his lack of the human qualities of a militant -- that is, his inability to present positively his own standpoint and views publicly and clearly. All he was able to do was to serve as a mediator in the manner of a young man of letters. Therefore, some might say, rather than assuming indecisive attitudes like Trotsky, it would be preferable for us to act more intractably like Lenin.

Indeed, this may be said. The human qualities which a revolutionary communist must always possess are the ability to express openly and fearlessly one's own beliefs, the confidence, courage and militancy to fight on to the end, brushing aside all authorities and all obstacles. However, in actual politics nothing works out so easily, everything is more complex. Here, illogical power relationships -- the dynamics of politics -- which lie beyond theory and which cannot be explained by theory, are powerfully at work.

There would be no such problem if actual politics would move rationally. Even though things ought to be accomplished in a rational manner, they do not lend themselves at all to logical explanations, and there is always an accretion of the illogical which attaches itself. This is the paradox of actual politics. The illogical moments in the class struggle, the illogical power relationships between antagonistic forces -- these things make up the dynamics of politics. Because he did not really understand this, but rather attempted to explain things in the manner of a young man of letters -- this is the fundamental reason why Trotsky who set out to be a revolutionary, became a mere theoretician and failed to become a true politician (in the Leninist sense). (This fact cannot be unrelated to the fact that in The Revolution betrayed although he poses the question of why Stalin won out, there is no deep clarity about the reasons why the Left Opposition, headed by Trotsky, was defeated.)

Thus, Trotsky himself before and after the Russian Revolution was almost completely lacking in an understanding of the dialectical process of actual politics. From this it follows that, theoretically, Trotsky's organisation theory inevitably possessed fatal flaws, and in political practice, in spite of his theoretical correctness and orthodoxy, he was totally vanquished by Stalin and his faction. Is it not all too natural that, as long as they remain unaware of this, and continue to defend to the death and absolutize Trotsky and Trotskyism, the Trotskyists of today are repeating the same errors as Trotsky in the actual revolutionary political movement? Since they continue to repeat these mistakes, they have not yet been able to overthrow the Stalinists and to raise themselves up to the position of the Mainstream faction, but are merely suffering from an inferiority complex and complaining about their position as a faction. The biggest lesson which we revolutionary communists must learn from the history of defeats of the Left Opposition is actually the defects and errors of Trotsky in the organisational problem, that is, the dynamics of actual politics.

The fact that the Japanese Trotskyist Association, as well as the world-wide organisation (the Fourth International) which bases itself upon Trotskyism, are still weak in spite of the unfolding of the struggle for anti-Stalinism ever since 1938, in itself proves in reality the defects in the praxis and theory of the self-styled Trotskyists. However, the Trotskyists who refuse to admit this explain the fact that the Fourth International has not yet sufficiently won over the masses, both world-wide and domestically, in connection with the "powerful pressure of the Russian Stalinist reaction since 1923". However, has there ever been an argument more deeply imbued with objectivism than this? This merely reveals that they have not learned any of the objective and subjective lessons about the reasons why the international organisation of the Left Opposition headed by Trotsky had to be defeated. This fact also manifests itself in the following manner. The fact that the Japanese Marxist ranks were completely dyed in the colours of Stalinism and academic Marxism and were unable to create revolutionary Opposition elements fighting against the authority of the Kremlin -- they seek the explanation for this in the big defeat of the world revolution, the loss of the standpoint of world revolution, the strengthening of the power and the repression of the ruling class, the degeneration of the Comintern, the rottenness of the Stalinists and the stream of defections. They are unable to expose subjectively the absence of practice and theory of revolutionary communists as revolutionary communists. Overconfidence in their own absolute correctness -- here is the biggest error of the self-styled Trotskyists and the fundamental reason for their fall into sectarianism in political practice. As long as this is not eliminated, we will certainly be unable to realise our revolution: not only that, we will also be hampered in rallying comrades to our ranks. Our concern is to fight for the Japanese revolution as one link in the world revolution. The standard for all value judgements ought to be laid precisely in this point, but definitely not in Trotskyism, as is done by the self-styled Trotskyists.

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Our chief organisational tactics for the time being must be the organisation of united actions and a united front of anti-Stalinists in spite of individual differences in views and concepts. Of course, the unfolding of such united actions does not mean in the least the theoretical or practical emasculation of the nuclear organisation of the revolutionary united front. During the process of united actions and joint struggles for realizing the common goals, the nuclear organisation must constantly carry on ideological struggles with the other Opposition factions, thus heightening and strengthening them theoretically and encouraging them to transform themselves in the direction of a truly revolutionary Opposition. At the same time, the nuclear organisation itself should also accomplish its own self-formation and transformation through the exertion of these influences. That is, this nuclear organisation should not be merely an aggregation of dogmatists devoted to whole-hog Trotskyism. Rather, it must be a mighty nuclear body

of true revolutionary communists basing themselves on the practical standpoint of embracing Trotskyism also as one of their own factors, creating a contemporary Marxism, and striving to materialise it in reality. The theoretical support and standpoint of such a nuclear body cannot, therefore, be mere Trotskyism. It must be creative = revolutionary Marxism which clearly distinguishes between the merits and demerits of Trotsky and Trotskyism and which unfolds itself in the contemporary manner through its actual application.

The nuclear organisation of today's Opposition united front, with the development of the revolutionary movement and the arrival of revolutionary crisis, must dissolve itself in a forward-looking manner into a new Communist Party, which will be an aggregate of revolutionary communists. "Forward-looking dissolution" is something that can be said about the form of today's nuclear organisation; it does not mean at all any dissolution of the practical standpoint and revolutionary theory which underlies our struggle and which must continue to be carried out in the future.

What measures should we take with reference to the wavering and collapse of the established parties in a period of revolutionary upsurge? These measures are not only aimed at attracting wavering elements inside the established parties and revolutionary workers to the nuclear organisations of the Opposition (for instance, the Japanese Trotskyist Association). Rather, this nuclear organisation ought to discard its conventional form of its own accord, thus creating a new pattern, for instance, the pattern of a new Communist Party, an aggregate of revolutionary communists centering around the revolutionary elements who belonged to the Japanese Trotskyist Association or who engaged in united actions with it. To assume organisational-tactical perspectives looking for the snowman-like swelling-up of the nuclear organisation is not only unrealistic, but it will also inevitably breed sectarianism and splits. Such a perspective is a delusion originating from a rejection of revolutionary united front tactics. At the same time, these must be called pseudo-Trotskyists who do not understand even the meaning of the fundamental principles of the Fourth International, which adopts tactics of entrism into the Socialist and Communist Parties.

In sum, the formation of a broad united front of the Opposition, centering mainly in the Left Opposition, the nucleus of which is revolutionary communists adopting the standpoint of creative Marxism, and the carrying-out of united actions and joint struggles while not rejecting mutual criticism -- this must be the fundamental line of the organisational tactics followed immediately by us revolutionary Marxists. ...

III. What is the Contemporary Unfolding of Marxism?

The contemporary unfolding of Marxism is not to worship Marxism as a dead dogma, but rather to unfold the problems still left in an undeveloped state in response to living reality, and to consolidate and develop Marxism itself as a whole. Originally Marxism was a revolutionary ideology formed as a total summing-up of the thinking of all humanity up to that time; the basic motive forces in its formation were the real problems of the 19th century. As such, Marxism is fundamentally unable to continue living without enrichment of the contents and theoretical deepening of Marxism itself in response to the historical development of capitalist reality. The arteries of Marxist thought throb loudly only when mediated by the agitated movement of living reality. In fact, the creative unfolding of Marxism by Lenin and Trotsky show this plainly -- even though they are afflicted with numerous mistakes, which is also inevitable. However, are the self-styled Leninists and the self-styled Trotskyists engaging in the same bitter subjective struggles as Lenin and Trotsky? It is precisely here that the question lies.

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It is true that Marx stated that he was not a Marxist. Trotsky also made the same sort of statements about himself. However, this does not mean that Marxism does not exist - the great, revolutionary contemporary ideology established by Marx the individual - but with the spiritual and material collaboration of Engels, his constant life-long comrade. And the fact that the revolutionary ideology established by Marx and Engels is still called "Marxism" today in no way indicates a tendency towards worship of the individual. This must be distinguished clearly from the case of Stalin. Although the name of Marx the individual is inscribed on it, "Marxism" is not only the possession of Marx the individual, but is nothing but the theoretical expression of the revolutionary labour movement in 19th century capitalist society, an expression on which Marx the individual rested directly. By this, or rather because of this, "Marxism", in spite of its being the crystallization of Marx's scientific and political practice, is also at the same time the common spiritual property of the proletariat of the entire world, and can also eventually become the glorious common property of all mankind. In other words, Marxism refers to the substantial essence of the world view (revolutionary communism) by which not only the proletariat of the entire world, but all mankind can live and die.

Precisely because Marxism fundamentally possesses such a nature, it is not an object which is to be worshipped, but rather a theory which ought to be inherited and developed. Only through being thus inherited subjectively and developed can Marxism continue to live as living Marxism. When Marxism is dogmatized it ceases to be Marxism. Lenin and Trotsky were among the few revolutionary Marxists who, rather than dogmatizing Marxism, inherited it and applied it creatively to new situations. But those who call themselves Marxists, or the self-styled Leninists or self-styled Trotskyists - are they subjectively accepting and applying Marxism, Leninism and Trotskyism in the same manner as Lenin or Trotsky? By no means. They are either exegetical text critics or armchair Marxists, if they are not dogmatists resembling the believers in a religion. ...

A. Marxism's Character as Eidetics.

However, what does it mean concretely to accept Marxism subjectively and to give it contemporary unfolding? Immediately it means nothing but to unfold Marxism anew as a guiding theory by which one can solve in living practice the problems presented by historical reality. However, the problem is this: as long as the subjective structure for this unfolding has not been made clear, one cannot thoroughly eradicate the roots from which dogmatism and misapplication are generated. One must first elucidate the logic of the basis for unfolding Marxism anew.

In order to do this, one must first establish what position is occupied by 19th century Marxism, established by the collaboration of Marx and Engels, in its system of development. For if this is not clearly established, open revisionism will be proposed under the name of a "new development of Marxism".

In actual fact, a new unfolding of Marxism corresponding to 20th century reality is today looming up more and more clearly in the general awareness as Stalinism closer and closer approaches its dusk. For example, a "20th century conversion of Marxism theory", suiting the state of mass society, the "special 20th c. reality", began to be proposed with much eclat after the end of 1956, with the powerful support of the mass society theory of bourgeois sociology. Furthermore, there are those who are seeking for the "20th c. form of existence of Marxist philosophy" in view of the acquisition of the temporary "peace" engendered by the "peace" policies of the Stalinists, the desire to save all mankind from the threat of nuclear war, and the search for breakthroughs leading to an escape from the unparalleled cruelties of Stalinism. In view of these developments it is argued that a "transposition of the central concepts" of Marxism is needed, that is, that one should

move away from "the dictatorship of the proletariat to the standpoint of human society". - 10 -

Even though the attempts mentioned here manifest themselves in the final result only as open revisions of Marxism, we have no intention of completely ignoring the "subjective" efforts which are at the bottom of them. Rather, we must delve deeper into the fact that these "good intentions" nevertheless result only in negative phenomena, and bringing the discussion down to a more profound level show a clear basis for attaining a true unfolding. This is what our concern ought to be. Of course, it is a certain fact that they have no understanding at all of the very essence of Marxism itself. Precisely because they do not grasp its essence, they can create nothing but revisionism, under the name of a new development. One of the foundations explaining why new developments of Marxism can manifest themselves only as its conversion or revision, has to do with the question mentioned as the primary problem.

That is, as long as Marxism, established by Marx and Engels, is grasped only as the immediate theoretical reflection of 19th c. reality, it is only natural that one should derive the conclusion that Marxist theory also must be converted in correspondence to the conversion undergone by capitalist society from 19th c. patterns to 20th c. century patterns. The 19th c. "civil society" developed into the 20th c. "mass" society; the split between the political state and civil society was sublated by the establishment of the mass state matching mass society; the proletariat "which has no fatherland" was converted into the mass "which has a fatherland"; the class struggle was converted into the peace movement operating through negotiations -- it is attempted to derive directly from such phenomenal-level facts, a shift in the patterns of existence of Marxist theory itself. This attempt itself merely reveals clearly that the nature of Marxism as eidetics is not understood at all.

Indeed, Marxism is fundamentally based on the immediate realities of 19th c. civil society, on the economic and social contradictions of that time, and their manifestation as the upsurge in the revolutionary movement of the working class. It is the theoretical expression of these things. It is an obvious fact that Marxism is impressed with a 19th c. character from its very basis of origin. However, the elucidation and overcoming of the problematics of the 19th c. civil society itself was carried out on the basis of the inheritance of the scientific tradition of French utopian socialism, German classical philosophy and English classical economics. In this manner, it acquired an eidetic grasp of the capitalist economy as the economic structure of civil society, as well as organisational tactics and strategic perspectives concerning its practical sublation by means of revolution. In other words, this was realized as Marxism. Therefore, even though the "civil society", the immediate 19th c. form of the capitalist economy, has undergone a transformation during the 20th c. and now appears in the real, direct form of the "mass society", Marxism can have at the same time a universal nature which requires no changes. If Marxism had been only a direct theoretical reflection of 19th c. civil society, it would naturally have to be converted in the 20th c. However, Marxism cannot be such an immediate cognitive result. Even though it is immediately rooted deeply in the realities of 19th c. civil society - or rather, because it is rooted in them - it transeends this immediacy and simultaneously grasps mediately the eidetic structure of capitalist society and economics. Such is the theoretical system of Marxism. When we say that the universal essence of capitalist economy is grasped in terms of the economic structure of commercial capitalism of the civil society, this means, not that the phenomenal-level peculiarities of this structure are described superficially, but rather that awareness is deepened down to the essential base for the generation of such phenomena, and that at the same time through this descending analysis, a foundation is provided for the phenomenal specifics or peculiarities. At the same time, on the other hand,

when we say that such an eidetic grasp is acquired mediately, -77- this means that the economic structure of capitalism grasped grasped eidetically is in itself also grasped at the same time as a thoroughly alienated (that is, completely reified) historical pattern of human society. Furthermore, it is concluded that the total practical sublation of such alienation is historically necessary. The proletarian idea that the human and universal liberation of reified humanity can be realised on the basis of revolutionary class struggle for the self-liberation of the proletariat - this idea is reached as the practical goal providing motive force from behind for revolutionary political practice. Marxism itself possesses just such an eidetic nature. Capital reveals this fact clearly.

B. The Logic of Revisionism

In cases when the nature of Marxism as eidetics, as outlined above, is not understood, revisionism necessarily must be constantly generated unconsciously. Of course, it goes without saying that revisionism in general basically results inevitably from a fundamental abandonment of the class standpoint of the revolutionary proletariat and an adoption of non-proletarian or petty-bourgeois standpoints. That is, the subjective basis for the occurrence of revised Marxism is a non-proletarian standpoint. However, when we consider the theoretical structure of such revisionism, it becomes clear that it is always based on an ignorance or distortion of Marxism's nature as eidetics. Or rather, the obliteration of Marxism's fundamental nature as eidetics is attempted in order to give revisionism a foundation and justification, claiming that it is not revisionism. These theoretical tricks and the non-proletarian standpoint are inseparably connected in revisionists; they are in a relationship of mutual reliance and mutual limitation. This can be said of all kinds of revisionism (both unconscious and conscious), and this deserves to be investigated concretely. But here let us merely take up the common theoretical structure of all revised Marxism.

Revisionism always, dazzled by phenomenal-level specifics or peculiarities, attempts to sacrifice even Marxism itself as an essential theory. The right-wing, Social-Democratic tendencies of the Second International, the Social-Democratic ideology of the 1920s and 1930s, which had delusions about the peaceful growth from "organised capitalism" into socialism, and what may be called the contemporary form of the latter, the "mass society" theory resting upon mass theory, or philosophical revisionism which, dazed by the peace movement, schemes for a "conversion of the central concepts of Marxism" - all of these are attempts to transmute or to revise even the essence of Marxist theory on account of immediate facts such as the development of the economic structure of capitalism from the latter half of the nineteenth century to the twentieth century (the stadial development from commercial capitalism to imperialism), and the changes in the social and political phenomena based on this - or attempts to bring about peaceful coexistence between both of them. The theory underlying this is clearly the theory of mirror-like reflection which brings reality and theory into a one-to-one correspondence. The logic of one-to-one correspondence (i.e., Marxism corresponding to the 19th century civil society, a new Marxism corresponding to the 20th century mass society conditions) is the logic of revisionism. This standpoint of simple reflection theory is the epistemological basis of revisionism. It abandons the attempt to grasp the eidetic structure. Or rather, instead of concretely unfolding eidetics from universal eidetics, (principle theory) in ascending direction to special theory (stadial theory) or specific theory (real pattern theory), it attempts merely to convert into theory the phenomenal-level specifics and peculiarities only as such. As long as this standpoint is reflected back into Marx's Marxism itself, Marxism as eidetics will in spite of this be interpreted

in a distorted manner by the method of direct reflection as a historical theory corresponding to 19th c. reality. Thus revisionism, because of its epistemological and theoretical defects, on the one hand, arbitrarily distorts the Marxism of Marx and gives it a distorted interpretation, while on the other hand it asserts its own "newness" on the basis of these distortions. However, this "newness" is a newness possible only on the basis of distortion. But this is concealed by its "class standpoint". While it claims to stand in the standpoint of the working class, it essentially assumes a non-proletarian standpoint. This is the reason why revisionism is revisionism.

Of course, the overt, rather than the covert revisionists advertise shamelessly the rationale by which their revisionist theories are supported. The revisionist Bernstein announced: "I have no need for dialectics. Dialectics is nothing but cant. Formal logic alone is sufficient." Even though they do not raise the banner of rejection of dialectics so bravely, it must be clearly realized at this time that our mass society theorists and revisionist Trotskyists are truly the logical descendants of Bernstein.

In this way, the theoretical (not the class) basis for the occurrence of revisionism consists in the inability to understand and grasp the nature of Marxism as eidetics. On the other hand, this fact is at the same time based on the fact that there is a complete lack of the logic of application of Marxism. Since both factors are inseparably related to each other, let us proceed from the viewpoint of the latter.

c C. The Logic of Application of Marxism.

As is often said, the practical character of Marxism consists in the fact that it unites theory and practice, with primacy given to practice. All theory in Marxism is always applied in revolutionary practice as a guide for political struggle, and by being applied in this way theory is tested, deepened, and developed. By the application of theory, practice becomes more goal-oriented, and theory is tempered through application. The reciprocal dialectics between theory and practice through the mediation of application - herein consists the revolutionary nature of Marxism and the material basis guaranteeing its development.

Granted that theory must be applied in practice, however, the theory which is to be applied cannot be something fixed. If it is fixed or regarded as something static, then this will inevitably manifest itself as dogmatism. The logical basis for the occurrence of dogmatism lies in fixing and dogmatizing a certain definite theory or thought and misapplying it directly in every case as an absolute standard. Social reality develops historically -- the propulsive force of this development is the total practice of men and classes, the subjective moment composing the reality (that is, their productive praxis and their class struggle). This being so, theory also must not be fixed but must be unfolded in response to this development. This unfolding of theory, the formation of new theory to be applied in practice -- this itself must also be realized as an application of already acquired theory, but this must always be without fail the application of essential theory. If this is not the case, practice will not be goal-oriented with long-term perspectives, but will be pragmatic practice governed by this or that phenomenon occurring from time to time. In the final analysis, one will inevitably fall into empiricism.

However, what does it signify to say that the theory to be applied to practice must itself also have at the same time significance as the application of a certain, definite essential theory?

When we attempt to grasp theoretically immediate reality, if we do nothing more than merely describe its superficial, specific phenomena, then we cannot possibly obtain anything more than a

mere phenomenal theory. However, if we grasp the essential aspects and the special conditions at the bottom of or behind these phenomena themselves, which define the phenomena as what they are, and if we theorize immediate reality as specific phenomenal patterns, in special manifestation, of the essentials already grasped, then we will have, not a simple phenomenal theory, but rather phenomenal pattern theory (mediated by essential theory), that is, special (stadial) theory or specific (reality) theory. If our practice is to be effective and creative, it is essential that it be more than a mere application of phenomenal theory (if it is, practice will inevitably have to go through empiricistic zigzags); an essential condition will be to apply this real (pattern) theory.

However, living reality is always changing and undergoing constant upheavals. As long as social reality itself continues to develop historically, special stadial theory and living specific reality theory must be formed and established in response to it. This is true because even living reality theory will die immediately if it is fixed statically in a form transcending the development of history. If one is to develop this sort of living (special or specific) real pattern theory, it is necessary to apply the already acquired essential theory and the various pattern theories mediated by it on the standpoint of analysis of the new conditions of social reality which are being formed historically. That is, living reality must be grasped as a new pattern of essential theory or real theory, which are themselves a conceptual grasp of historical, social reality -- this is exactly what is meant by the application of theory.

When the application of theory is spoken of, it is always based without fail on the supposition that essential theory is formed and established.

On the other hand, when there is no essential theory which can be applied, it is necessary to begin with immediate reality. Through the descending process of analytical cognition, one must theorize eidetics. Then, in ascending synthetical unfolding from this eidetics, one must establish real (pattern) theory as the conceptual grasp of immediate reality. This real pattern theory has significance as a specific or special eidetics with respect to the universal eidetics underlying it. Eidetics becomes real only as the sum total of all theories, whether universal, special (stadial) or specific (real). This is precisely the theoretical systematization of the real content grasped conceptually. Eidetics itself makes up such a three-dimensional structure. The beginning of the universal eidetics which is unfolded from special stadial theory to specific reality theory is immediacy mediated by the immediacy of objective cognition (the outset of cognition), and the ascending synthetic development up from this beginning of science is precisely the eidetic scientific system. Because the objective precondition of this eidetic theoretical system is its material foundation, that is, the essential identity of the object of cognition as well as the phenomenal pattern shifts of the object of cognition, it must necessarily contain within itself special stadial theory and specific reality theory. This spiraling, ascending movement of the ontological unfolding of eidetics is mediated by, and is the product of, the spiraling movement of descending cognition from phenomenal theory to substance theory, and thence to eidetics. However, the epistemological process and the ontological process do not correspond with each other directly in their unfolding at each of their stages. On the other hand, the process of descending cognition possesses simultaneously significance as historical reflection from present to past; while the ontological unfolding of ascending synthesis possesses simultaneously significance as historical formulation from past to present. The logical grasp of immediate reality is essentially united with the historical grasp of it. Thus the scientific system, while being logical, at the same time possesses an intrinsically historical nature. (See "Hegel and Marx", and "The logic of the formation of Marxism".)

In cases when essential theory has been grasped by the cognitive activity just described, it is not necessary to perform anew descending analysis towards eidetics. In the ascending unfolding from the already established eidetics, one need only take the living, immediate reality and theorize it as the phenomenal pattern of this eidetics (formation of real pattern theories). In other words, in the application of theory, the cognitive process is abbreviated. One need merely unfold living, real pattern theory on the basis of a scientific cognition of the peculiarities of the newly formed historical reality and of the special, specific conditions of the immediate reality. This is done by grasping the immediate reality as a special or specific real pattern of essential, universal theory. (Note: Theory is a system of laws.)

However, even in cases when theories to be applied (or universal, essential laws) have already been established, the application of theories or laws will degenerate into mere misapplication if there is lacking the subjective standpoint just described, that is the practical standpoint of applying theories and laws. Theory to be applied can become living reality theory only through the subject applying it. In the absence of an applying = cognizing subject, theory will be forced onto reality, and reality will be judged by theory. This is the logical basis for the occurrence of formalism (formalistic clean-sweep judgement). At the same time, misapplication presupposes an absolutization and fixation of the theory to be misapplied, that is, its dogmatization. For this reason, formalism is merely one manifestation of dogmatism, and is an error which is the direct opposite of empiricism, which ignores the application of theory and clings to phenomenal facts.

Errors such as zigzag type empiricism or misapplication type formalism, as is clear from what has already been said, originate from total ignorance of the cognitive process of how theory, essential theory is grasped from reality, and of the practical nature of this process: that is, what significance theory possesses with respect to historical reality. Revisionism originated because theory, inspite of the fact that it was eidetic theory, was interpreted in a distorted manner from the standpoint of the logic of correspondence of mirror-type reflection theory. Empiricism and formalism, just mentioned, also are errors based on the same epistemological basis as the basis for the occurrence of revisionism. / Diagrams illustrating 1. Empiricism and formalism, 2. The structure of eidetic cognition, 3. The logic of application of eidetics, omitted here, BCP./

Now let us explain the logic given above in terms of concrete questions. For instance, the following facts are clearly shown by the revision of Marxist theory by the mass society theory. First, (a) there is no understanding of the essential nature of Marxian theory itself, which was the product of the theoretical grasp of 19th c. capitalist society. Furthermore, (b) the application of this Marxist theory as eidetics is also ignored. What is really important is to grasp in the ascending direction the phenomenal peculiarities of the mass society situation, which is a special 20th c. reality, by applying the universal laws of capitalism elucidated by Marx; noting that the mass society situation is a real pattern of capitalism. Our concern is not to deal exclusively with the patternshifts of the immediacy of capitalist society (the transition from civil society to mass society). Those who concern themselves only with matters in the latter manner reveal that they have no understanding whatever of the nature of Marxism as eidetics. For this very reason, the universal eidetics = principle theory (Capital) of capitalist society and the theory of monopoly capitalism as a special stadial theory of the former, as well as the "mass society" theory, which is only a product of phenomenological cognition of the immediacy of capitalist society at the monopoly stage -- these two are not connected logically, but are merely grasped as if they involved a "shift". As a result, they are forced into "peaceful coexistence" with each other.-- In fact, the advocates of the "mass society" theory do not make

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any distinction between eidetics or principle theory (Capital) and special stadial theory (for instance, Lenin's Imperialism); they have no three-dimensional, structural grasp of them both. It would be more accurate to say that they grasp them in terms of relationships of historical sequence; for instance, regarding the former (Capital) as theory of the commercial capitalist stage, and the latter as theory of the imperialist stage. In other words, in their conception, the form of society has developed from civil society to mass society and the form of the state from the night-watchman state to the mass state in correspondence to the historical development of the economic structure from commercial capitalism to imperialism. If this were represented diagrammatically, it would be: Commercial capitalism = civil society = night watchman state ---> imperialism = mass society = mass state. This is obviously merely phenomenal theory of historicism based on a formalistic method of thinking.

Therefore, the 20th c. revision of Marxism by means of the "mass society" theory, as well as the contemporary peaceful coexistence of classical Marxism and the "mass society" theory, are nothing but a faithful manifestation of epistemological defects: mirror-like reflection theory and the rationale of one-to-one correspondence. This follows inevitably, not only from the lack of the standpoint of the cognizing subject, but also, from the fact that the subject applying theory is completely absent.

On the other hand, the utter confusion surrounding the so-called impoverishment theory is in the final result the product of essentially exactly the same errors as with the decisive methodological defects in the mass society theory. For Marx's elucidation of the absolute general laws of capitalist accumulation is mistaken for a theory of "absolute" impoverishment, and this is misapplied in unmodified form directly to the immediate reality of historically changing capitalist society (thence arises the so-called "tatter-and-shreds impoverishment theory"). At the same time, the items which are not relevant to this misapplication are "theoretically" interpreted as "relative" impoverishment, and the conclusion which is reached speaks about "absolute and relative impoverishment" or of "relative and sometimes absolute" impoverishment. This flat method of thinking, this "cut and dried" way of grasping things, is proof of a complete lack of understanding, both of the meaning of Marx's elucidation of economic laws, and of their locational, subjective application. Since Marx's absolute, general laws are essential laws grasped locationally, they must be applied locationally in the present tense. That is, the core of the problem is to establish theory by grasping the phenomenal peculiarities of immediate reality as the present-tense, locational phenomenal patterns of eidetic laws.

The state of "impoverishment" in English civil society during the 1850s and 1860s was the material basis on which Marx abstracted the absolute, general law of capitalistic accumulation. There could be nothing more absurd than to engage in comparative exegesis of this with the "impoverishment" in mass society, a special 20th c. phenomenon. Albeit within the capitalistically alienated framework, society as a whole must at any rate progress through the application of science and technology to manufacturing, the fundamental impetus in this progress being the proletarian class struggle; from the viewpoint of the level of productivity, it is only natural that the capitalist economy should have developed amazingly from the 19th c. into the 20th c. In spite of the fact that the economy as a whole has been developing, from the present-tense, locational viewpoint it is important to realize that the "absolute, general laws" are being fulfilled contemporarily. In other words, it is only natural that the patterns in which the "absolute, general laws" are fulfilled should differ between the 19th c. and the 20th c. It serves no useful purpose at all to compare the 19th c. patterns and the 20th c. patterns of the capitalist economy and derive conclusions about the transformation of "impoverishment" into relative impoverishment, improvements of standards of living, and wage increases. The only result will be

that such conclusions will be put to use to justify Social-Democratic ideology or revised capitalism. (The foregoing discussion about the "impoverishment" theory is extremely inadequate. See "A hundred years after Capital".)

It is not clear whether they are partially conscious of these matters or not, but there are those who have evolved the following interpretation. The class struggle is, at any rate, operating in the background of the law of wages and of other economic laws; for this reason, the fact that impoverishment has not become absolute is in itself nothing but a manifestation of the pressure exerted by the working class. This as a whole signifies the fulfillment of the "absolute law". Such philistine interpretations have even been carried to the point where pseudo-scholars go to ruin by referring to the impoverishment of the brain as an example of "impoverishment". This appears to be a first-aid measure seeking emergency assistance in an Engelsian interpretation of economic laws. However, it still remains nothing but an exegetical excursion in which eidetic laws are explained in the manner of Stalinist economists, are used as the single yardstick and are directly imposed on reality and misapplied. It is truly deplorable, since these Stalinists have hung out the sign of "contemporary Marxism". The only thing they do are clever Stalinist tricks, donning only an Engels-like mantle. But think! Where was the basis of the "impoverishment" theory? Was it not rooted in their inability to grasp the class struggle as something within economic laws? To see the class struggle as something behind (not inside) economic laws, means that economic laws are significant only as yardsticks to be misapplied to actual class struggle, in fact, that they can be made to function only in such a manner...

Even a superficial survey of these debates is sufficient to make it self-evident that it is quite impossible to attain a contemporary unfolding of Marxism as long as Marx's method is not assimilated as one's own. What is necessary for a contemporary unfolding of Marxism is, as was already mentioned, to grasp subjectively the nature of Marxism itself as eidetics, adopting the same practical standpoint as Marx, and from this standpoint to apply the principles of Marxism locationally in the present tense. Otherwise, nothing can be created except philistine explanations or revisionism. And this can also serve as a scathing criticism of our Trotskyists.

We have already mentioned the limitations of the Japanese Trotskyists and Trotskyism itself with reference chiefly to the theory of dictatorship and USSR theory / ch. II C, not reproduced here/.

The defects of Lenin's theory of the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants originated in the fact that Lenin's own methodology was defective in spite of Lenin's wonderful practical and organisational ability as a revolutionary. That is, there was no ascending conceptual unfolding from the principles of Marxist revolutionary theory (the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat); it was nothing more than a simple empirical method. Of course, we must evaluate highly the fact that Lenin analyzed concretely the political and economic backwardness of Russia and the special nature of the power relationships between the class forces in Russia as determined by this backwardness. But at the same time, there were defects in his standpoint of analysis (he lacked intuitive grasp of the fact that capitalism had plunged into a new stage - of course, this was before "imperialism as the highest stage of development of capitalism" was given theoretical formulation in 1916 - and adopted a historicistic viewpoint). In addition, he had inadequate understanding of the eidetic logic of the proletarian revolution. Because of these defects, he took the organisational tactics problem about allied forces (substantial theory) and immediately substituted it for the strategical problem having to do with definition of the character of the revolution (eidetics). Consequently, he inevitably had to create the concept of the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants", in which eidetic and substantial theory, strategic theory and organisational tactics theory are superimposed in double exposure.

On the other hand, this is a necessary result of formalism, in which the theory of historical stages of development in historical materialism... is understood in a formal and intuitive manner and is directly misapplied to the special conditions of Russia.

A formalistic misapplication of historical materialism was united with the defect of flatness in logical analysis to produce a two-stage perspective, in which the bourgeois-democratic revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat was held to lead to the proletarian socialist revolution. It is, of course, certain that this was formulated in correspondence to the historical development of phenomenal facts, which was superficially reduced to a formula. However, the strategic course leading from a bourgeois-democratic revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat, even though it has at its basis perspectives of world revolution and the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, is nevertheless a product of superimposing in many layers a number of defects and errors such as the following. (1) Problems of tactics and organisational tactics of the subject carrying out revolution concerning the allied forces are superimposed upon and confused with strategic problems dealing with the definition of the nature of the revolution. (2) Problems concerning the essence of the revolutionary power to be established (the question of dictatorship) are confused with problems of the substance composing the power (the question of the government). (3) The subjective standpoint, that is, the standpoint of realizing historical tasks locationally at the active present, is lacking. (In other words, the error of converting the historical into the logical, thus transforming the logical into the historical, or historicistic objectivism which results of necessity from the complete lack of understanding of the concept of system genesis in individual genesis.) Precisely because fallacies of this sort of the two-stage strategic theory are not clearly realized, the foundation is provided for the inevitable appearance of a series of bad seconds of Lenin such as Mao Tse-tung's theory of the coalition dictatorship, or the so-called People's Democracy theory.

On the other hand, Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, in spite of its magnificence, contains latent defects. In short, these defects are based on the fact that descending analysis of the peculiarities of Russia and application of the principle theory of Marxism about the proletarian revolution are not developed in a truly unified manner. As a result, the two aspects of the theory of permanent revolution -- the question of power functions and the question of world revolution -- cannot be developed in a truly unified manner. But how would it be possible to lead the revolutionary movement of the international proletariat forward towards glorious victory without developing these two questions in a unified manner and without evolving the logic of the contemporary proletarian world revolution? -- The total unfolding of this revolutionary theory will be made at another time.

However, methodological defects are decisive in the same manner also in the internal splits in the Japanese Trotskyist Association concerning USSR theory as well as in the Tsushima type USSR theory. The theory that the USSR is "red imperialism" is formulated as a result of failure to assimilate subjectively Marx's theory of socialist society (Critique of the Gotha Programme). In other words, this is directly misapplied to the realities of the present political and economic system of the USSR, not from the standpoint of the subject applying theory (the practical standpoint of the subject striving to carry out revolution), but merely in the manner of an exegetical text critic. To this is inextricably connected the backward-looking, unpractical, reactionary standpoint of using the Marxian value theory (the eidetical, essential theory of capitalist society and economy) as the trump card to make clean-sweep judgements with utter facility about the contradiction-filled structure of society in the transitional period from capitalism to socialism -- a transitional society which must become more and more monstrously deformed because of conditions such as economic backwardness, the delay of the world revolution, the isolation of the revolution, the resulting military expansions towards the

peripheries, and further the repression to eradicate all Left Opposition factions rebelling against such mistaken policies.

Under any circumstances, there is nothing so foolish as to bring eidetics (the law of value grasped by analysis of realities, the theory of socialist society as foreseen by laws) in unmodified form into direct correspondence with reality and to misapply it in exegesis. Perhaps it may be the work of a scholar to engage in such exegesis, but this will not bring the revolutionary movement one step forward. Adopting such an exegetical standpoint, one completely loses sight of the question of how to carry out revolutionary political struggles; furthermore, one runs the risk of playing into the hands of the Stalinist bureaucrats desirous of maintaining the present USSR system or even of the American imperialists. It is only to be expected that there should be divergences between the Sollen (the "ought") of socialist society and the Sein (actuality) of the actual USSR. It serves no useful purpose whatsoever to grasp statically today's USSR, encircled by world imperialism, and claiming to elucidate it from the standpoint of "economics", to judge the statically posited USSR system and define it as "bureaucratic state capitalism", using as one's fragmentary yardsticks such concepts as "wage labour", "extortion of surplus value", or "determination of distribution relations by production relations". The question is not to put on airs as a theorist by means of such interpretations, jumping with joy whenever one discovers a divergence. The question is rather to elucidate the society of the transitional period to socialism, the distorted form of which is today's USSR, with relation to the question of how to revolutionize this USSR in organic connection with the prospects of world revolution and the struggle to carry out world revolution in the form of the permanent overthrowing of the state powers of world imperialism. In other words, the question is a practical elucidation from a world-historical perspective. We shall treat elsewhere of the formalistic, unpractical nature of patterns of thinking which equate the USSR with "red imperialism" or with a "something" which is neither capitalism nor a workers' state.

On the other hand, the basic foundation of the divergence between our Trotskyists and the revisionist Trotskyists is their lack of the standpoint of applying practically Marxist theory. We will fail to discover the solution for the divergences as long as we do not deepen the discussion down to this level. Naturally we expect it from the Stalinist philistines, but even though the external authority and pressure of the Fourth Internationalists are applied against us, we who adopt the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism will resolutely stand up for our principles as revolutionary communists.

The central question for us must always be to adopt the correct stance, the question of how to get to the bottom of the problem, and from what angle. We are not blind followers, even of the Trotskyism of the Fourth International. This is so because the life-and-death question for us is to fight for and win our revolution as one link in the world revolution, as well as to evolve the theory for realizing this goal, and to attain a contemporary unfolding of Marxism. The Trotskyism of Trotsky as well should not be dogmatized, as is done by our Trotskyists, nor should it be misapplied dogmatically. It is not and cannot be anything more than something to be critically assimilated in the process of the contemporary unfolding of Marxism. It ought to be applied in the confrontation with living actual tasks, and through this application it ought to be either revised, rejected, or further developed. This fundamental standpoint of ours is just the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism. The creative standpoint of the communist who gives a contemporary unfolding to Marxism and strives to apply it to revolutionary practice, is, at the same time, the same standpoint as that of Marx himself.

* * * * *

VLADIMIR AKIMOV,

EXTRACTS FROM - "THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY" (1904).

Introduction to Akimov (the following introduction is taken from J. Frankel, Vladimir Akimov on the Dilemmas of Russian Marxism 1895 - 1903, Cambridge, 1969 pp.83 ff.)

Akimov did for the dying Economist faction what Lenin had tried to do for Iskra and would do for Bolshevism: he developed its ideas into a logical, unambiguous and uncompromising version of Marxism. Totally opposed to each other, Akimov and Lenin were united in their impatience with the equivocations on which Plekhanov had built and yet they both remained recognizably Plekhanov's pupils, armed with weapons from his armoury.

In the case which he developed against Iskra, Akimov took as his starting-point the thesis that socialism could be built only by a proletariat consciously ready for this, its ultimate mission in history... At the Second Congress Akimov argued, correctly as we now know, that a programme which omitted all mention of proletarian class consciousness and spoke of the proletariat in the objective rather than the subjective case clearly revealed the hand of Lenin. In Plekhanov's thought, after all, the gradual awakening of the proletariat had always been a favourite theme. It was this idea which in the 1880s had inspired his anger against Tikhomirov and the Narodnaia Volia who, in his view, had believed that the working-classes were necessary for the revolution rather than that revolution should be made for the working class and, therefore, by the working class. ..

Believing this how, asked Akimov, could Plekhanov have endorsed a programme which gave no independent role to the working class as such, but concentrated all initiative and all consciousness in the hands of the Social Democratic party? In actual fact, he noted ironically, Plekhanov's own published commentary contradicted the spirit of the programme it was ostensibly written to explain. Plekhanov had written that, according to the programme, the Social Democratic movement does everything to 'accelerate the development of the class-consciousness of the proletariat', but this idea, clearly abhorrent to Lenin, was nowhere to be found in the programme itself. Lenin believed that class consciousness was not acquired by an organic process which could be 'accelerated', but that it was the monopoly of the party which had to 'divert' the proletariat when necessary on to the right track. Akimov was laughed down at the Congress, but through the jeers he foresaw that the alliance between Plekhanov and Lenin could hardly survive so radical a disagreement for long. Their partnership, in practice, outlasted the Congress, but Plekhanov's 'Bolshevik' career came to an end a few months later, in November 1903. In his booklet on the programme of 1904, Akimov wrote that Plekhanov would now doubtless come out with a critique of What is to be Done? .. and such an attack did in fact appear later in 1904. Among the Russian Marxists of the time, Akimov was distinguished by just this ability to move freely and surely from the analysis of an apparently insignificant choice of words to the clash of personalities which lay behind that choice and thence to its ultimate implications - ideological and political.

As for Lenin, so for Akimov, the question of the role of the Marxist intelligentsia, - of conscious intervention from outside the labour movement - was the pivot on which all else hinged. In Lenin's scheme of things, the party was moving in one direction, the labour movement in another, and only constant vigilance by the revolutionaries could save the proletariat for socialism. This analysis, Lenin was convinced, was truly Marxist, for Marx had said that philosophy should not merely describe but should change society, and the decisive intervention of the few, the philosophers, had therefore to be seen as an essential component of genuine determinism. Nevertheless, pessimism played almost as central a role in Lenin's thought as in that of Tkachev.

In contrast, Akinov was very much the optimist. Following Kremer's On Agitation (1894), he believed that the labour movement steadily required a growing appreciation of its place in society and of the need for concerted political action to transform that society. The development of capitalist industry guaranteed that the workers would unite and gain constant experience in the problems of organisation and economics, politics and power. This was not to say that the Marxist intelligentsia had no role to play: they, after all, knew the function for which history was educating the masses and they had to hurry on the process of education. But this was a two-way process. Certainly the Social Democrats had to lead, explain and organize, but they had also to learn from and adjust to the transformations taking place within the working class. They had to keep only one pace ahead of the labour movement, or, as Plekhanov had once put it, 'give conscious expression to an unconscious, blind historical process'.

The clash of Lenin's pessimistic analysis with Akinov's optimism was strikingly illustrated in their conflicting interpretations of Party history. From Lenin's theory it clearly followed that the Russian Social Democratic movement had been created by the teoretiki (theoreticians) 'in total independence of the blind growth of the labour movement and as the inevitable result of the way in which the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia was developing its ideas' (What is to be Done?). It had made its great advance when the two branches were first successfully married in the mid-1890s, when the St Petersburg Union of Struggle - the orthodox Marxists - had taken the strike movement under its wing. The St Petersburg Union of 1895 had understood that it had to give a firm lead to the workers and inspire them with 'a very broad programme and militant tactics'. Yet the fate of this entire experiment had always hung in the balance and it did not survive the arrests which constantly carried off the leaders. Their replacements, ill-versed in Marxist theory, were unable to give a firm lead and found themselves pulled off their own track and on to that of the labour movement. They encouraged Rabochnaia Mysl' (Labour Thought) which pronounced the disastrous, 'trade-unionist' philosophy that the workers had to run their own affairs and could not leave their fate to the intelligentsia. Thus, the second period, the mid-1890s, when the Social Democrats had finally begun to take the proletariat in tow, had given way to the third period, 1898-1902, when the intelligentsia had drifted rudderless amidst the currents of the labour movement. Iskra had opened the fourth period in which the revolutionary Marxists would again assert their legitimate authority, taking as their goal 'the liquidation of the third period' (Lenin).

In his A Short History of the Social Democratic Movement in Russia (1905) Akinov accepted Lenin's periodization, but nothing else. As for the origins of the Party, it was a truism that Marxist theory could only have been developed by men with a very high level of education, by the intelligentsia. But this did not mean that Lenin (or, indeed, Aksel'rod) was right to see the gestation of Russian Marxism as a process of pure intellectual speculation among a 'small group of emigrés'. The fact was that years before Plekhanov had become a Marxist he had been confronted in St Petersburg by an emergent proletarian organization, the Northern Union of Russian Workers, and had been immensely impressed by the independence, courage and political maturity of its leaders, all workers. Plekhanov, in later adopting Marxism abroad, had merely given theoretical form to the concrete reality he had met in St Petersburg years earlier: 'The embryo of the future workers party', wrote Akinov, 'was the mass labour movement. And the Russian Social Democratic movement... was born in the large industrial centres, the centres of socio-political life, and its first attempt at organization was the Northern Union of Workers'. Ironically enough, this clash of interpretations was reproduced in the Soviet Union of the 1920s, with the leading Communist historian of the time, Pokrovskii, arguing - like Akinov, but with no acknowledgement to him - that 'Marxist philosophy began to form in Russia on the basis of the labour movement' and with Lev Deich, defending the thesis of Lenin and

and Aksel'rod that Russian Marxism was the product of Plekhanov's intellectual exploration alone.

Again, Akinov tried to show that throughout the 1880s and early 1890s, Lenin's 'first period', revolutionaries within Russia had found their way independently of Plekhanov's Group for the Emancipation of Labour to Marxism, albeit of a primitive kind, and had doggedly sought contact among the industrial workers. The St Petersburg Union of 1895 had thus not appeared out of the blue but was the culmination of innumerable experiments in various Russian cities during the previous decade..

In his analysis of the 'second' and 'third' periods, Akinov sought further support for his evolutionary concept of Party history which he was ready enough to call the 'theory of stages'. This was a term used with derision by Iskra to characterize the philosophy of Rabochee Delo (Workers' Cause) but, then, Akinov was distinguished by an unusual ability to ride out ridicule and isolation. For him, the 'theory of stages' did not mean - as implied by Iskra - that the proletariat had been left to progress at its own speed, with the revolutionaries taking their place at the tail of the labour movement, but that the Social Democrats had always been forced to pitch their propaganda and agitation at various levels in order to meet the given needs of each particular stratum of the proletariat. Anyone trying to write Party history was duty-bound to understand that the Social Democrats, unable to go faster than the leading workers and determined to exert their influence on the proletariat as widely as possible, had inevitably advanced at different speeds in different places and at different times. Looked at from this point of view, the St Petersburg Union of 1895 appeared much less glamorous than in Lenin's description. The Union of Struggle had certainly put itself at the head of the labour movement in a period of upsurge, but in order to do so it had presented the workers not with Lenin's 'very broad programme and militant tactics' but with leaflets embodying the most simple demands for a 'penny on the pound'. This was all it could do at a time when the Social Democrats were first trying to gain the confidence of the workers and when the labour movement itself was first finding its feet. Lenin was right to describe the St Petersburg Union as the symbol of the movement in the mid-1890s, the second period, but in reality this was the period of pure 'economism' when the Social Democrats had fed the workers with primitive agitation of a purely 'trade union' nature. In this sense, 'the first economists and indeed the only real economists were none other than the members of the Union of Struggle in 1895 - the subsequent founders of Iskra'.

In comparison, the next, the 'third period', marked a definite advance at all levels. The Social Democrats had everywhere made their agitation more sophisticated, moving from purely 'economic' wage claims to demands for civil rights and then, eventually, to the call for the overthrow of the autocracy. For their part, the leading workers had thrown themselves into the work of revolutionary organization and had even taken it upon themselves to produce illegal newspapers. If, in response to this initiative from below, some Social Democrats had sought ways to permit representatives of the workers' groups into their own organizations - into the St Petersburg Union, for example - then this simply demonstrated that the movement for the proletariat was at last becoming a movement of the proletariat. In adopting the workers' journal, Arbeter Shtime, the Bund had shown an imaginative approach notably lacking among the veteran leaders /Plekhanov, Aksel'rod, etc./ who regarded any independent action by the workers as a sign of trade-unionism and any concession to them as a surrender of leadership, as khvostizm - following at the tail end. Of course, Akinov wrote, the workers' ideas were as yet 'untutored, clumsy, unsubtle! ... Such newspapers (as Rabochaia Mysl) are not enough, but they are enormously important and necessary, for the thinking of the workers can develop only on the condition (though not the sole condition) that the workers have an opportunity to formulate their ideas'....

In his What is to be Done? Lenin reproduced or quoted a number of programmes drawn up in Russia which were designed to admit workers' representatives into the Social Democratic organizations and which he saw as typical of the degeneration of the 'third period'. But, answered Akinov - and this was the central argument of his Short History - Lenin examined these programmes in the light of ideal standards. He had no feeling for the relativity of things, no understanding of the experimentation and errors which must accompany all growth.

By the time he came to write his booklets in 1904, Akinov could point to the disastrous effects of the attempt to place a narrow hierarchy of orthodox and professional revolutionaries over the workers' organisations. The initial result, as predicted by the Economists, had been to alienate many workers from the Social Democratic movement. (Even Plekhanov had complained to Lenin in a letter of April 1903 that 'to many it seems that Iskra wants the workers to give unconditional obedience to the intelligentsia... We must dispel this view. But to do so we must moderate the excessively centralistic fever of our followers'.) And its ultimate result had been to split the Party from top to bottom. 'Our Party' Akinov could write, 'has never been in such a state of anarchy as today.' The concept of a party totally unified, totally centralized and free of all ideological impurities had encouraged Iskra's adherents to define all dissent as deviation. For Akinov, the root of the problem thus lay in the fact that 'the 'organisation of professional revolutionaries' was transformed from a means by which the proletarian movement could find expression into a self-sufficient end in itself'.....

* * * *

Akinov-

The Iskra programme is constructed along the lines of the Erfurt Programme. The Erfurt programme consists of three parts: a characterization of contemporary society and its course of development, a statement of Social Democratic goals, and a discussion of how these goals are to be attained. The Iskra draft adds to these an introduction on the international character of Social Democracy.

Modern society and its development are characterized in the Erfurt programme in four theses: (1) the development of modern society is in the direction of division into two camps, capitalist and proletarian; (2) the wealth of some and the poverty of others both increase; (3) there is also growing antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; (4) crises intensify this antagonism and expose the internal contradictions and bankruptcy of the existing order.

In the Vienna programme, the first thesis of the Erfurt programme is further subdivided; the programme first states the fact that society is divided into classes, and then notes the tendency toward a deepening of this division. The Iskra programme is at this point close to the formulation of the Vienna programme.

The second paragraph of the Erfurt programme answers the question of how the process of the development of society affects the individual classes. The third paragraph notes the antagonism between the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In the Iskra draft we no longer see the clarity of formulation found in the Erfurt programme. On the one hand, the factor of dissatisfaction and struggle is entirely absent from these theses; it is transferred to subsequent paragraphs and interpreted differently than in the Erfurt programme. On the other hand, the effect of social development on the interests of the proletariat is noted not only in this paragraph, but three times, in three separate theses. Nevertheless, it is not clearly formulated and remains vague and indefinite. Moreover, this vagueness results from the fact that the authors have sought here to formulate an antiquated view, which can no longer withstand criticism and which is at variance with the modern tactics of international Social Democracy.

- 1) The Iskra programme that Akinov refers to, and the debate around the various drafts, can be found in Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 6

And yet this paragraph touches upon a most important question, which has been debated in the foreign socialist press as the theory of pauperization.

The final paragraph of the first part of the programme corresponds to the text of the Erfurt programme. At the congress, I also proposed an amendment to the point concerning crises. However, since this amendment bears only indirectly on the tendencies in the programme which I oppose, I shall not return to it in the present work. Now will I discuss most of my other amendments.

Further, the second part of the programme, dealing with the Party's goals, again deviates from the Erfurt programme. It was evidently meant to follow the scheme of the Vienna programme. However, the similarity to the Vienna programme is only in form. In substance, its approach to the proletariat is very different not only from the spirit of the Vienna programme, but also from that of the Erfurt programme, as well as from the most fundamental principles of scientific socialism. My statement to this effect was distorted by Comrade Lenin. And since I was unable to answer him then, I shall answer him now.

The third part of the Erfurt programme, dealing with the Party's tasks, falls into five points. Formally, the Iskra programme follows the same pattern. The first and last paragraphs of the German programme, corresponding to the last paragraph of the Russian programme, discuss our Party's attitude toward non-proletarian classes. The second paragraph deals with the conquest of political power. The third, dealing with the role of Social Democracy with respect to the proletariat, defines the relationship between the concepts of party and class. The fourth paragraph proclaims the international character of our movement. In the Iskra programme, this point appears in the beginning, in the form of an introduction. In essence, however, every one of these theses diverges most sharply from the ideas of the Erfurt programme. Sometimes, only the terms are new, only the shades of meaning; the distinctions seem only semantic - yet what a vast difference they make in these two programmes! As a result, the two programmes emerge as remarkably complete expressions of two sharply divergent philosophies...

The Premises of Socialism.

The goal of the international Social Democratic party is to replace the present capitalist system with a socialist system, under which 'large-scale production will be transformed from a source of poverty and enslavement into a source of the highest welfare'. This is what the Erfurt programme states and this should be the idea set forth in every Social Democratic programme. But the Vienna programme points out that the capitalist system itself will inevitably produce the forces and the means for its own destruction, and the creation of a new world. These forces lie in the proletariat, which becomes conscious of its class interests and ideals, the theoretical expression of which is scientific socialism. And the means are the technical advances which permit the organization of collective production. Here, too, the Iskra programme deviates from the Erfurt programme and follows the order of the Vienna programme, but only the order, not the ideas.

'The necessary material and spiritual conditions for new forms of collective production are created', says the Vienna programme. The material conditions reside in the fact that, already within the capitalist system, production becomes collective, 'individual production is squeezed out', and therefore 'individual ownership becomes superfluous and harmful'. The right of private property becomes a harmful legal institution, a privilege which is at variance with actual relationships and the requirements of further social development. It becomes possible and necessary to transform the instruments of collective labour into collective property.

As for the spiritual conditions, they lie in the fact that 'the greater the expansion of the proletariat, resulting from the development of capitalism, the more is it compelled to launch a struggle against capitalism, and the more capable it becomes of waging this struggle... The proletariat begins to realize that it must further hasten the development (of society) and that its goal should be the transfer of the means of production to common ownership by the entire people.'

The Iskra draft offers a good formulation of the process which creates 'the material conditions for the replacement of capitalist by socialist productive relations'. I would say, however, that the draft speaks only about material conditions. The proletarians are regarded here merely as the instrumentum vocale: these instruments become sufficient in number ('the proletarians... grow in number'). Just as giant machines are made up of individual mate tools and implements which were formerly separate units in the artisan's workshop, so do modern plants and factories master within themselves whole collectives of human instruments, once scattered through outlying districts... The draft also states that the labouring and exploited masses become increasingly dissatisfied' and that the struggle between the proletarians and 'their exploiters becomes ever sharper'. But these were precisely the characteristics of the slaves of ancient Rome - mere 'speaking instruments'. They too constituted a 'labouring and exploited mass' whose 'dissatisfaction' grew and whose 'struggle against their exploiters became ever sharper'...

Are these the qualities of the proletarians which make us certain of the victory of the working class? Are these the conditions assuring the coming of a socialist system? What of the creative spiritual forces of the proletariat? What of its class consciousness?

Let us take a look at Plekhanov's comments. He writes on p.31, 'Our draft programme says that as the contradictions inherent in capitalist society develop, "there is also an increase in the dissatisfaction of the labouring and exploited mass and the proletariat's revolutionary struggle against the exploiters becomes ever sharper"'. (From Plekhanov's commentary on the draft programme published in *Zaria* no.4, 1902.) In quoting the text, Plekhanov amends it. In the quotation as he gives it, he inserts the word 'revolutionary' before 'struggle'. He also uses the term 'proletariat' (ie, a class) instead of 'they' or 'proletarians' (ie, a sum of individuals). These are highly significant corrections. In Plekhanov's formulation, the scattered individual struggles of proletarians are seen as the molecular movement of a single, powerful social force. In the draft's formulation, the proletarians are 'human dust' flying into the eyes of the exploiters.

Plekhanov's amendment is essential, but insufficient. After the passage quoted above, Plekhanov continues his commentary and amendments as follows:

'These words, it seems to us, correctly express the attitude toward capital of the various classes of the people oppressed by it. Its yoke is felt today not only by the proletariat, and the proletariat is not alone in resenting this yoke. But only the proletariat consciously rebels against it; the proletariat alone wages a revolutionary struggle against capital, ie, a struggle aimed at the abolition of capitalist relations in production' (all emphases Plekhanov's).

And so, in Plekhanov's opinion, the draft has reference to 'various classes of the oppressed people'. Dissatisfaction grows among the entire 'labouring and exploited mass', including the proletariat. But, in contrast to other classes, the proletariat is not only dissatisfied; it 'consciously rebels' and 'wages a revolutionary struggle'.

'It seems' to Plekhanov that this entirely correct idea is 'correctly expressed' by the wording of the draft programme. Plekhanov wants to convince his readers that the words of the

draft - they 'became increasingly dissatisfied', and 'their struggle against their exploiters becomes even sharper' - mean the same as the 'conscious rebellion' and the 'revolutionary struggle' of a class, the 'proletariat'! Here, too, Plekhanov is amending the draft, in which there is no reference whatever either to the conscious or to the revolutionary nature of the proletariat's struggle or to its class character.

Plekhanov categorically, tirelessly, eulogizes the new draft, calling it 'fully orthodox' and 'a photographically exact picture of reality'. And if anyone 'does not like' 'orthodoxy', 'he does not have to read the draft; it was not written for him'. But there are several places in the draft programme where it glaringly deviates from 'orthodoxy'. In such cases Plekhanov declares that 'it seems' to him that the draft expresses such and such an idea, and then proceeds to formulate his own amendment.

I endorse Plekhanov's amendments. I want our programme to state that 'as the contradictions inherent in bourgeois society grow' (Iskra draft), 'there is also an increase in the conscious, revolutionary class struggle, the rebellion of the proletariat' (Plekhanov's amendment). Instead, it speaks merely of 'their (the proletarians') struggle with their exploiters'. Such a struggle has been characteristic of all oppressed people, under all systems of productive relations in past eras.

But how did it come about that an orthodox Social Democratic programme, stating the basic premises of socialism, did not find it necessary to note the conscious, revolutionary, and class character of the proletarian struggle? This cannot be, and is not, accidental. It fully corresponds to the view of one of the authors of the draft, Comrade Lenin, who regards the proletariat as a passive medium in which the bacillus of socialism, introduced from outside, can develop.

In his book What is to be Done?, Comrade Lenin offers the following view:

'The theory of socialism grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories that were developed by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. The founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, were themselves, in social position, members of the bourgeois intelligentsia. Similarly in Russia the theoretical doctrine of Social Democracy arose entirely independently of the spontaneous labour movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of the thought of the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia.'

'Taken by themselves, these strikes (of 1896) were trade-union struggles, but not yet Social Democratic struggles. They marked the awakening of antagonism between workers and employers, but the workers were not and could not be conscious of the irreconcilable conflict of their interests with the entire modern political and social system. They still lacked Social Democratic consciousness... This consciousness could only be brought to them from the outside. The history of all countries shows that, by its own efforts alone, the working class is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e., realization of the necessity for combining into trade-unions, waging a struggle with the employers, and seeking to press the government to pass... laws.'

'They imagine that a pure and simple labour movement will evolve its own independent ideology... But this is a profound mistake... There can be no talk of an independent ideology, developed by the labouring masses in the process of their movement. (In creating an ideology) the workers take part not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians, as Proudhons and Weitlings. Spontaneous development of the labour movement leads precisely to its subordination to bourgeois ideology... The spontaneous labour movement is trade-unionism, it is Nur-Gewerkschafterei (mere trade-unionism), and trade-unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie.'

Thus the expressions we see in the draft programme were taken almost in toto from the above lines by Lenin...Of course, Lenin is not against consciousness and revolutionary ideas; however, in his view, these excellent qualities belong not to the proletariat but to the revolutionary-socialist intelligentsia. It is the latter which, having organised the Social Democratic Party, will 'introduce' them into the 'labouring masses'. Therefore, this entire problem is discussed later, in that section of the draft which deals with the tasks of the Party.

And the paragraph under discussion formulates Lenin's view that, to make 'social revolution possible', there must be 'technological progress, growth in the number and solidarity of the proletarians, and a sharpening of their struggle against their exploiters'. All the rest will be done by the 'social-revolutionary intelligentsia', the 'professional revolutionaries'. They will form the party, which will be 'the conscious spokesman of the proletariat's class movement', 'basing itself' on a large number of massed proletarians. In support of his view concerning the role of the intelligentsia, Lenin quotes in What is to Be Done? Kautsky's speech at the Vienna Congress. Kautsky said:

'It is absolutely untrue that socialist consciousness is a necessary and direct product of the proletarian class struggle.

Socialism and class struggle arise side by side, and not one out of the other; they arise out of different premises. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. And the vehicle of science is not the proletariat but the bourgeois intelligentsia (Kautsky's emphasis). Thus socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletariat's class struggle from without, and not something that arose from it spontaneously.'

Kautsky's view is absolutely wrong. I shall confine myself here to a quotation from Adler's reply to Kautsky's words, since Lenin's position, as I shall try to show, goes far beyond Kautsky's. Besides, if Kautsky may have had some grounds for saying that these disagreements with Adler were a Doktorfrage (academic question) rather than programmatic differences, in Lenin's formulation the theory of priming¹ the proletariat with socialism (Erfüllungstheorie) runs counter to the basic principles of scientific socialism.

Adler replied to Kautsky as follows:

'In his criticism, Kautsky asserted, among other things, that the draft contains a contradiction, since it says in one place that Socialist Democracy must seek the emancipation of the entire people from the shackles of economic slavery, etc., and, in another, that this consciousness, this striving, arises in the proletariat spontaneously.. I consider the text of the draft entirely correct, and find no contradiction in it. It says here that the proletariat arrives at an understanding of this entire development, that it becomes aware that the goal of the struggle for the liberation of the working-class must be Communism. The vehicle of this development, as the draft goes on to say, can be none other than the organised proletariat itself. As for awakening the proletariat - this, in turn, can only be the task of Social Democracy. Thus, as I have already stated, I find no contradiction here; moreover, I maintain the view that the whole development of the theory of socialism relates to the labour movement as an ideological superstructure relates to material economic development generally. I am convinced that the entire progress of socialist thought can be explained by the economic movement of the proletariat itself...I believe that the socialist idea is the product of the working-class..Social Democracy is its brain..The birthplace of Social Democratic thought is the proletariat;

1) 'priming'; 'to prime', i.e., 'to prepare (a gun, explosive mixture) for being let off'.

Social Democracy is the product of this thought, and it brings the proletariat to self-knowledge'.

However, although Kautsky considers that 'socialism and class struggle arise side by side', he also holds that they develop along parallel lines, and that the rivulet of 'consciousness' finally flows into the current of the proletarian movement. This image has been used repeatedly as a figurative description of the development of the socialist labour movement.

'The theory of socialism', says Vandervelde (Socialism in Belgium, 1898): 'born of compassion, remained divided from day-to-day socialism, born of suffering. It required long years, full of heavy ordeals, for the thinkers and the proletarians to join forces and extend a hand to each other.' But in Vandervelde's thought, too, the intellectuals and proletarians are merely the theoreticians and the practical elements of the same movement - socialism. In Lenin's view, however, the 'intelligentsia' develops in one direction. The 'theory of socialism' grows out of 'philosophic, historical, and economic theories'. But the proletariat moves in a different direction, it moves toward 'its subordination to bourgeois ideology'; the spontaneous labour movement is trade-unionism. Hence, the intelligentsia must launch a struggle against spontaneous development and 'divert (Lenin's emphasis) the labour movement from this spontaneous striving'.

No Social Democrat has, to my knowledge, ever attained such paradoxes!

It is enough to pick up any work of Marx and Engels to see how widely this basic view of Lenin's, which is so fully reflected in the Iskra draft programme, diverges from the views of the founders of scientific socialism.

I shall not attempt here to compare Lenin's views with those of Marx and Engels. This was done before me, and better than I could do it, by Comrade Martynov in his report to the congress in the name of our organization. Comrade Martynov confined himself to a single correction of the draft programme, selecting precisely this paragraph as the most important. And rightly so. But it seems to me that Comrade Martynov was mistaken not to review all of the programme's theses, and not to show how the basic error of the programme was reflected in each of them...

In issue no. 41 of Iskra, Plekhanov says that Iskra's draft programme is indeed the only programme that could have been adopted by the Emancipation of Labour Group. But every reader of his works must be impressed by Plekhanov's purely Marxist view that the ideology of the proletariat is developed 'by the labouring masses themselves in the very progress of their movement'.

'All that is left to the ideologists is to formulate the ideology and to establish its theoretical foundation; then - proceeding from the theory thus established - to point out the best ways toward achieving the goal and predict the conditions under which the struggle will have to be waged in the future...'

Such is the purpose and role of scientific socialism. And because this idea permeates all of Plekhanov's works, from the first to the very latest, including, as I have shown, his commentaries I shall limit myself here to only two points.

'Ideas, notions, conceptions, in short - man's entire outlook, change with changing conditions of existence, social relations and social life.' This, according to Marx, is how the 'independent ideology' of a class is developed. Citing the above lines from the Communist Manifesto, Plekhanov remarks quite justly that this theory impregnates the whole Manifesto 'and comprises what may without risk of error be called its fundamental idea'.

The proletariat's philosophy is thus created by the conditions of its existence. As the proletariat evolves into an independent class, its ideas form themselves into an orderly theory.

This superstructure of independent ideology lags behind its base, behind the conditions of its existence which have changed in the course of a given period of time. This is why the proletariat remains for a time under the sway of the ideology of the class whose dominance historically precedes the rule of the proletariat. But it finally liberates itself from this ideology.

On 1 May, 1891, a group of workers celebrated this international proletarian holiday in Petersburg. Four speeches were delivered. They were published abroad with an introduction by Plekhanov, in which he wrote:

'Among the most advanced circles of Russian workers, that vanguard of the Russian, awareness of the socio-political tasks of the working-class has already attained such clear-cut forms that all that is left for us, the revolutionary 'intellectuals', is to take note of them and guide ourselves by them, abandoning for all time our long search for the best of all possible programmes.. This means that the workers have outstripped the bourgeoisie, and that all truly progressive people must come under the banner of the workers'.

Rabochaia Mysl' went no further in narrowing the role assigned to 'us, the revolutionary "intellectuals"' - perhaps because there was no further to go. Today, twelve years after the writing of those lines, we revolutionary 'intellectuals' might say to Plekhanov: "We are ready to take note of and guide ourselves by the ideas of the vanguard of the Russian revolutionary proletariat but allow us, for the time being, not to abandon our long search!" In reply, we hear with astonishment that the programme of the Emancipation of Labour Group can be nothing but that of the author of What is to be Done? who says that the revolutionary-intellectual (this time, without the quotation marks) will not only 'develop the theoretical doctrine of Social Democracy entirely independently of the spontaneous labour movement', but must also divert this movement from its false path.

A pamphlet by the editors of the Sotsial-Demokrat, presented in 1891 at the International Socialist Congress, had this to say, among other things...

'It would be superfluous to seek to convince you, who represent the revolutionary proletariat, of the revolutionary role assigned by history to the modern proletariat. It would be equally superfluous to say that where there is no proletariat, there can be no socialist movement worthy of the name. Each of you knows all too well that modern socialism is nothing else - to use the words of Engels - than the theoretical expression of the movement of the proletariat.

Nothing else! Socialism is only the theoretical expression of the movement of the proletariat! And so 'the movement of the proletariat' is socialist. At a given period, of course, the 'movement of the proletariat' may not yet present socialist demands. Specific forms of the 'movement of the proletariat' may, of course, 'in themselves', not be socialist. But in the direction taken by growing 'movement of the proletariat', in the goals which will inevitably sooner or later be proclaimed by the proletariat, in the significance of the particular acts of the proletariat in its class struggle - this movement is socialist. It develops spontaneously in the direction of socialism, and Social Democracy merely consciously elects as its goal that which will be the inevitable outcome of the initially unconscious 'movement of the proletariat'.

Social Democracy has no need to 'divert' the proletariat from its path; it can and must seek only to accelerate its movement. Social Democracy has no reason to fear this spontaneous element - it is our own element. We are the 'firelighters'. Are we then to fear 'the beneficial, purifying flame'? We are the 'stormy petrels' - are we to fear the storm? We are the 'waves', the children of 'the hoary ocean'! With fire, we call up rebellion. With storm, we call the revolution. With turbulent ocean, we invoke the movement of the people.

In his note explaining the programme, Plekhanov says, 'Carefully, and not without "orthodox" intent, we have underlined in our draft the role of Social Democracy as the advance unit of the workers' army and, at the same time, as its leader.' Plekhanov goes on to show how the authors of the programme have emphasised this role. Without using quotation marks, he cites almost verbatim the text of the draft on p.30 of his commentary, giving the reader the illusion that everything said here by Plekhanov is indeed to be found in the programme. But the programme does not contain the most important things said by Plekhanov. In this case, too, he corrects a word in quoting a passage, and inserts several words of his own. Then he breaks into a philippic (invective) against the 'critical' 'sedition' which, supposedly, 'has created a thick fog, leading the Russian Social Democrats of the "Economist" school to imagine that the duty of Social Democracy is not indefatigably and as rapidly as possible to stimulate the class consciousness of the proletariat, but solely to express that which has already been created without any assistance from the revolutionary bacillus.'

But all these charges are nothing but 'fog'! Russian Social Democrats, whether of the 'Economist' or any other 'seditious' tendency, have never imagined what Plekhanov attributes to them. Even when it was said that the role of the intelligentsia was 'to express that which has already been created', this was considered necessary precisely in order to stimulate 'indefatigably and as rapidly as possible the self-awareness of the proletariat'. As for the fog, Plekhanov needed it so that he might, under its cover, present not the idea expressed in the programme, but an entirely different (and quite correct) idea, sharply at variance with the programme.

Plekhanov defines the meaning of the programme as follows:

'It (Social Democracy) organizes the working class into an independent party, which opposes all the parties of the exploiters. It exposes to the working class the irreconcilable contradiction between the interests of the exploiters and those of the exploited. And, generally, by all the means available to it, it seeks to accelerate (Plekhanov's emphasis) the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat and to clarify for the latter the necessity and the character of the coming social revolution'.

On the whole, this quotation differs from the text of the programme no more than a translation differs from the original, except that the phrase 'and generally, by all means available to it, it seeks to accelerate the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat' was inserted by Plekhanov himself.

In the entire quotation, Plekhanov underlines only one word - accelerate; evidently, he quite justly invests it with special importance. But this word is not in the programme, as indeed it could not be. For anyone who says that Social Democracy accelerates the development of the proletariat's class consciousness obviously expresses an idea diametrically opposed to the idea of the man who finds it necessary to bring socialist consciousness to the proletariat 'from the outside' and who feels that 'by its own efforts alone the working class is able to develop only trade-union consciousness'. Under such conditions, it is natural that Plekhanov wants to 'accelerate' the development of the proletariat's self-awareness, while Lenin wants to 'divert' the proletariat from its path. Both are right from their respective points of view. But the points of view are poles apart.

I certainly did not insist - as Plekhanov says I did - that he divorce Marshall Lenin. But let him first openly divorce the old Plekhanov, the author of the above quotations. There is no alternative!

SOCIAL CLASSES UNDER MODERN CAPITALISM. NO. 4

MICHAEL LOWY, TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGY OF THE ANTI-CAPITALIST
INTELLIGENTSIA

(Translated from Pour Une Sociologie des Intellectuels
Révolutionnaires: L'Évolution politique de Lukacs 1900-1929
Ch.1, 1-3, Paris, 1976)

1. Intellectuals as a Social Category.

Who is an intellectual? Obviously one is dealing with a type that is strange and difficult to classify. The first clue we have to go by is that intellectuals come from all classes and strata of society; they may be aristocrats (Tolstoy), industrialists (Owen), professors (Hegel) or artisans (Proudhon). In other words, intellectuals are not a class but a social category: their definition depends not on their place in the process of production, but on the relation they bear to the extra-economic moments of the social structure; just as the bureaucracy and army are defined in relation to politics, intellectuals are definable in terms of their relation to the ideological superstructure. That is to say, intellectuals are a social category defined by their ideological function: they are the immediate producers in the sphere of ideology, or they are creators of ideological-cultural products. Thus they occupy a specific position in what one might call the ideological process of production, the position of immediate producers, which as such is something quite distinct from the position of those who actually own, administer or distribute cultural goods. Defined in this way, intellectuals comprise such groups as writers, artists, poets, philosophers, scholars, research-workers, publicists, theologians, certain sorts of journalists, certain types of teachers and students, etc. They constitute the "creative" sector of a more widespread mass of "intellectual workers" (as against "manual workers") which includes the liberal professions, employees, engineers, etc. They also form that sector of this mass which is most distant from economic production.

The way intellectuals behave is determined to some extent by their specific class-origins, but also by the fact that they belong to a common social category, just as, with the exception of periods of crisis, members of the bureaucracy or army tend to behave in the first instance as members of their respective categories.

As a social category defined by maximum distance from the material process of production, intellectuals enjoy a certain autonomy in relation to the different classes, an autonomy reflected in a kind of instability, or by fluctuations and movements in various directions. Hence the adjective *freischwebend* (free floating) applied to them by Alfred Weber and by Mannheim. On the other hand, contrary to the way Mannheim understands this - he tends to convert this autonomy into something absolute - there is no really "neutral" supra-class intelligentsia. Like the hot-air balloons on St. John's night, intellectuals do not float eternally; they generally end by succumbing to the law of gravity and gravitating to one of the basic social classes in conflict (bourgeoisie, proletariat, sometimes peasantry) or otherwise to the class that is closest to them, the petty-bourgeoisie.

Indeed, the label "petty-bourgeois intellectual" contains a large measure of truth, despite its abusive character. Between the intelligentsia and the petty-bourgeoisie there is an affinity or intimacy or complicity that is sociologically explicable. In the first place, because the majority of members of the intelligentsia are recruited from the ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie, to be more exact, from the sector of "intellectual workers" rather than from the other sectors of this class, such as small traders, small peasants, etc. Thus a large fraction of the social category and the class of petty-bourgeois are connected by social origin. This connection, which can scarcely be denied, should be neither ignored nor exaggerated. In the second place, because the intellectual professions (writer, professor, artist, etc), the means of work and

subsistence open to intellectuals traditionally belonged, by their very nature, to the petty-bourgeoisie in general and to the liberal professions in particular (this does not preclude the fact that a minority within the intelligentsia belongs, by profession or social position, to the bourgeoisie, aristocracy or working class).

2. Sociological Remarks on the Anticapitalist Radicalization of Intellectuals: The Role of Ethico-Cultural Mediations.

In an article dated 1920 Lukacs wrote that as a social class the intelligentsia was not revolutionary, that intellectuals could become revolutionaries only as individuals. But Lukacs seems to forget that when many individuals, a large mass of individuals (intellectuals) become revolutionary, we are no longer dealing with a "personal" case, a matter of psychology, but with a social phenomenon which must be explained sociologically.

It is quite obvious that Lukacs himself was not an isolated example. A large section of his circle and a large number of intellectuals of different backgrounds declared their allegiance to the Hungarian Communist Party in the years 1918/1919. Many others extended their support, in one form or another, to the Hungarian Commune led by Bela Kun, as Lukacs himself acknowledges (in 1969) "If not the whole intelligentsia of Hungary, then at least the leading elements of Hungarian culture were from the very started prepared to collaborate with the power of the councils. The cultural policies (of the regime) found a very widespread social base".

In fact, Lukacs and his comrades in Hungary are only a particular example of much more universal phenomenon: the fact that innumerable intellectuals, from Marx to our times, went over politically to the side of working class and joined its revolutionary vanguard. Here is an incontestable and well known fact whose sociological basis, however, has not been sufficiently explored till today. Taking the example of Lukacs, which is a significant one, I shall try to formulate some general hypotheses on this question. The question itself can be put as follows: why does a significant section of the intelligentsia become radically opposed to capitalism and end by aligning itself with the working class movement and the Marxist worldview? It appears to me that the forces underlying this phenomenon are very different from those that drive the proletariat towards socialism through its direct experience of exploitation and through motivations that are in the first place of a directly social and economic nature. How does an intellectual become anticapitalist? How is the intelligentsia radicalized? What forces determine this general phenomenon, especially in the specific case of the period of Lukacs' youth?

In my opinion, there are two distinct types of sociological processes which we should analyze: Those that define the petty-bourgeoisie as a whole and those that are specific to intellectuals (and these are chiefly of an ethico-cultural nature).

Given the very close affinity that exists between petty-bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, the "mechanisms" of radicalisation that operate with reference to the former are bound to have their repercussions on the latter. The causes of an anti-capitalist attitude within the petty-bourgeoisie are thus to a large extent valid also for the intelligentsia; with this additional circumstance that tendencies that exist within the class in a diluted form take on a much more concentrated and intense form in the social category defined specifically by its function of ideological elaboration.

For the petty-bourgeoisie defined as a social class occupying a specific place in the relations of production, these causes are basically of a social-economic and politico-social nature:

1) The "precapitalist" nature of work within the petty-bourgeoisie. In the case of the artisan, the smallholding peasant, members of the liberal professions and traditional intellectuals there is no separation between the producer and the product of his labour, between the individual and the process of production between the worker's personality and his work. The development of capitalism, which introduces a break, a dissociation, a tearing of this unity, is resented by the petty-bourgeoisie as a

process hostile to its form of life or mode of existence. ³

2) The proletarianisation of the petty-bourgeoisie and of intellectuals in various forms: unemployment, or underemployment, declining standards of life, reduction to the position of wage-labourers. This material downgrading of the petty-bourgeoisie to the condition of the proletariat frequently, though not necessarily, generates a bitter and virulent revolt against capitalism - against the force responsible for this brutal destruction of the class. (Strictly speaking, such revolts do not always lead to Socialism. Sometimes they lead to Fascism.)

3) Political causes: the Jacobinism of the leftwing of the petty-bourgeoisie, a specific combination of Plebeian Democracy and of a romanticising ethics (Rousseau) tends to conflict with the liberal-individualist ideology and practice of the big bourgeoisie. In countries where the bourgeoisie plays a revolutionary role, this contradiction is to some extent suspended - here the petty-bourgeoisie and intellectuals tend to gravitate around the bourgeoisie (eg, 18th c. France). On the other hand, in the "backward" countries of the 19th (Germany) or of the 20th (Russia) century where the bourgeoisie no longer plays a revolutionary role, and, out of fear of the popular masses, capitulates to the monarchy, the landowners and Conservatives, petty-bourgeois Jacobinism tends to take on a radical character and to come into conflict with the bourgeoisie which it accuses of betraying democratic principles. Such a process of radicalisation can eventually lead a fraction of the petty-bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, now compelled to fight for freedom and democracy, into a violent break with the bourgeoisie and into turning socialist. The two classic examples of this shift are: Marx and other German intellectuals before 1848, and the Russian intelligentsia of the 19th c. In Russia in 1917/19 not only intellectuals but large sections of the urban and, above all, of the rural petty-bourgeoisie supported the Bolsheviks who appeared to them to be the only force capable of realising the tasks of the democratic revolution.

Now we have to examine the determinants which are specific to the radicalisation of the intellectuals as such (as distinct from the properties they share in common with the petty-bourgeoisie.) As a social category, intellectuals are defined by the relation they bear to the ideological superstructure; it is therefore quite comprehensible that their development into Socialism passes through ethico-cultural and politico-moral mediations:

1) Intellectuals - writers, poets, artists, theologians, academics, etc, live in a universe governed by qualitative values: life and death, beauty and ugliness, truth and falsehood, good and bad, just and unjust, etc. Many intellectuals thus find themselves naturally or spontaneously or organically in conflict with the bourgeois universe which is rigorously governed by purely quantitative values, or exchange-values. To an artist a painting is, in the first instance, something beautiful, luminous, expressive, exciting and so on. To the capitalist it is, in the first instance, this object worth roughly 50,000 francs! And this only expresses an opposition between two utterly heterogeneous worlds: between the intellectual and bourgeois society there is often a relation of antipathy in the strict, traditional, sense of this word. In alchemy 'antipathy' refers to "a lack of affinity between two substances". The two 'substances' are - qualitative values/quantitative values, an ethical or aesthetic culture on one side, money on the other. And in this tension there is nothing static: the world of quantitative values expands continuously, threatens to absorb and disfigure qualitative values, to dissolve them, subject them to controls, reduce them to pure exchange-value. The intellectual resists this transformation of every cultural or material product, every sentiment, or principle or emotion into a pure commodity, into a "thing" bought and sold at some appropriate price. To the extent that such resistance is actually offered, the intellectual must live his opposition to capitalism as a gut reaction. Only in

so far as he capitulates, or to the extent that he subordinates the qualitative values of his ideological/cultural universe to the domination of exchange-value, is it possible for capitalism to integrate the intellectual. The distinction between these two types of intellectuals is a normal one and sometimes takes the form of a violent break (for example, Salvador Dali's expulsion from the Surrealist group, which branded him "Avida Dollars"...). Intermediate cases are also found, where intellectuals attempt an eclectic reconciliation of the contradictory pressures.

The romantic anti-capitalism of the Central European intelligentsia of the late 19th/early 20th century, or their ideology of the antithesis between "Culture" and "Civilisation", was precisely an expression of opposition of this sort. One of Lukacs' greatest merits is that he used the theory of reification to reformulate in Marxist terms the confused and romanticist critiques directed by intellectuals against the inexorable process of quantification bound up with the capitalist mode of production.

2) By virtue of their distance from material production and mainly of their very nature as a social category (defined by its ideological function), intellectuals form the specific group in society for which ideologies and values have the greatest significance and most decisive weight. It follows that no group took the principles, values and ideals of bourgeois humanism, from the Renaissance down to the Enlightenment and classical German philosophy, more "seriously" than the intelligentsia. As Lukacs shows, once in power the bourgeoisie was compelled to act in contradiction to its own ideology, to deny, degrade and abandon in practice the values which it had incessantly proclaimed as its own. In the name of these self-same humanist principles, the intelligentsia then turned around against the bourgeoisie and capitalism, and finally discovered in the working class the only class truly capable of realizing the ideals of liberty, equality and brotherhood. In their eyes "Marxist humanism thus became heir to the highest achievements of bourgeois thinkers and the workers' movement was ascribed the role of carrying through in practice ideas that had till then been defended exclusively in theory" (Jakubowsky).

To Lukacs and his generation, the Great War of 1914 was probably the most striking expression of the deep gulf that now separated the humanist traditions of classical culture and the concrete reality of bourgeois society and capitalism. The movement of "politicisation" that so many intellectuals went through after 1914 is to some extent an expression of this ethico-cultural crisis.

Obviously, intellectuals did not react to this contradiction in the same way; in relation to the Great War one could distinguish roughly three tendencies: 1) an effort to deny the contradiction between capitalist reality and its humanist ideology; in this case the war of 1914 was presented as a conflict between German civilisation and Russian barbarism, or, conversely, between Western democracy and German barbarism; 2) a critique of the War in terms borrowed from liberal-democratic ideology - in the name of peace, brotherhood between nations and the democratic rights of nations. However, a critique in these terms can take on a more radical form, it can assume the nature of an opposition to imperialism or capitalism on the world scale and pass over into 3) a discovery of the working class as the sole bearer of democratic and humanist values against the generalised capitalist barbarism. The possibility of intellectuals taking up the latter positions flows from the very nature of their social category, from the specific weight that values occupy in their form of life. Whether an intellectual chose position 2) or position 3) would have depended not only on the degree to which capitalism repelled him, but also on the degree to which the workers' movement attracted him. Such attraction is in the first instance of an ideological or theoretical nature. Marxism as a coherent, scientific and revolutionary system, appears to many radicalized intellectuals as the only theory that explains and reveals the true cause of

reification, of the crushing dominance of the quantitative, the depersonalisation of life, degradation of values, war - capitalism. Marxism attracts these intellectuals not only by its intellectual rigour, by the global and universal nature of its conception of the world, but also because it preaches the complete abolition of the hegemony of exchange-value over social life, and because it is capable of pointing to a real social force that tends in this direction: the revolutionary working-class. In the case of many radicalized intellectuals the discovery of the proletariat as subject of history and gravedigger of capitalism flowed directly from their acquaintance with Marxist theory. So whether the intelligentsia aligns itself politically with the working class or remains stuck at a purely ethico-cultural phase of their revolt depends to a certain degree on the prior existence of a Marxist tradition in the given country and on the accessibility of Marxist literature.

Sometimes, the very movement of rejecting capitalism in a radical and coherent form leads to the discovery of Marxism and to the intellectual's passing over to the side of the working-class. But for a large number of intellectuals an external catalyst, such as the revolutionary period of 1917, is necessary before their diffuse and amorphous anti-capitalism crystallizes into a more definite commitment to the working-class. This is especially true for those intellectuals who, like Lukacs, had already become violently and totally opposed to capitalism in an ethico-cultural sense but who were in no way attracted by a workers' movement still hegemonised, in one form or another (revisionist or Kautskyan) by a reformist and parliamentary Social-Democracy. Only the massive historical interruptions of the working class (in 1917/19) drove this "extremist" wing of the intelligentsia over to its ranks and into the Communist Party.

3. The Anticapitalism of the Intellectuals in Germany.

If the phenomenon of an intelligentsia opposed to capitalism is a more or less universal one for Europe at the turn of the century, in Germany it appeared in an especially sharp form. Why exactly Germany? One of the reasons is undoubtedly the anticapitalist tradition of a romanticism deeply ingrained in the German intelligentsia as early as the 19th century.

According to Lukacs, "despite its temporary retreat around the middle of the century, the ideology of romanticism was one that exerted the greatest influence on German intellectuals. And this is not accidental. Its forms corresponded best to the position of intellectuals in the general environment of German backwardness..". In fact, through their social situation and form of life intellectuals found themselves closely linked to the pre-capitalist sectors of German society, and in particular to the petty-bourgeoisie. Yet, if German romanticism formed the common ideological terrain of all strata and social classes whose interests and mode of life were hit by the development of capitalism, the movement found its most important social base in the traditional petty-bourgeoisie, from whose ranks it recruited its leading literary, philosophical and political spokesmen.

The ideology of romanticism combined opposition to Enlightenment philosophy, the French Revolution and the Code Napoleon with an anticapitalist dimension defined by its outright rejection of the social universe of capitalism, of economic liberalism and even of industrialization itself. As against a developing capitalism that reduced man to an abstract, quantifiable magnitude and progressively installed a rigorously quantitative rationalism, romanticism put up a passionate defence of concrete, qualitative and intuitive forms of life and thought, of the personal and concrete human relationships that persisted in the pre-capitalist strata (peasantry, petty-bourgeoisie, nobility). The old traditions, styles of life and modes of social behaviour which were negated by abstract bourgeois rationalism were ideologically rehabilitated and restored by the romantics. (cf. Mannheim, 'Conservative

'Thought', Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology, London 1953) Against the abstract conceptions of property and freedom propagated by the liberal bourgeoisie, the romantic doctrine developed the traditional, qualitative conception of them as concrete relations between actual persons; for example, feudal property, organically linked to the person of the landowner, inalienable and unquantifiable, was set up in opposition to the venal nature of the modern bourgeois relationship...

Paradoxically, thanks to its conservative opposition to capitalism, romanticism could afford the luxury of a more lucid perception of the class-contradictions within industrial society than bourgeois liberalism could evolve from its own false assumptions about 'preestablished harmony'. Adam Muller, who categorically rejected the doctrine of Adam Smith, wrote, "Is it all that surprising, when we have committed ourselves to building a world given over entirely to egoism, a system of reason that excludes God and the Revelation, a money-system that ignores reciprocal and voluntary services, a system of private property where no communal rights survive, in short when we are building a State without the Church - is it surprising that in a world like this only two classes should be left facing each other - the less numerous class of property-owners and an infinitely large mass of persons without property?" (1818). Parts of this sentence forcefully recall certain formulations of the Communist Manifesto; yet Marx had nothing but contempt for what he called "feudal socialism"; while acknowledging that the latter "sometimes, by its bitter and incisive critique, struck the bourgeoisie to the heart's core", he made it quite clear that "through its complete inability to comprehend the march of modern history, it produces a ludicrous effect". Marx is no less critical towards the other variant of midcentury neo-romanticism, "German socialism" or "true socialism", the political and ideological expression of the pre-capitalist petty-bourgeoisie. In fact, Marx's socialism has nothing to do, socially or ideologically, with the romantics' opposition to capitalism: it finds its own roots in a quite different sector of the petty-bourgeoisie - one that supported Jacobinism, the Enlightenment, the democratic revolution, opposed feudalism and in general glorified the French; Heinrich Heine, a trenchant enemy of romanticism, was its most brilliant literary representative. Coming from the more advanced or more "bourgeois" areas of Germany (Rhineland-Westphalia), frequently Jewish, this "republican" intelligentsia would be deeply frustrated by the political "cowardice" of the liberal bourgeoisie of Germany or its inability to lead a consistent revolutionary struggle for democracy against the feudal monarchy. Some of them would thus, like Marx himself, break with the bourgeoisie and look for another class with which to align against the established regime. When he arrived in Paris towards the close of 1843, Marx found a clear and coherent answer, one that struck him as irrefutable: precisely the working-class would play this revolutionary role, carrying through at one stroke the political (antifeudal) and the human, or universal (socialist) emancipation of Germany. (See my book, "The theory of revolution in the young Marx", Paris 1970).

To some extent it was Schopenhauer and, even more than him, Nietzsche, who played the role of linking up the start-of-century romanticism with its renovated version of 1880-1918. Having said this, we should note that in his social and political ideology Nietzsche was at once close to, and distant from the romantics' opposition to capitalism. Through his hatred of the French Revolution and of "French ideas", or "modern ideas" or the "ideas of the 18th century" which, in his eyes, were responsible for the "plebeian sordidness" of the English, Nietzsche shared some of the basic conceptions of Adam Muller. But he saw in Napoleon, arch-enemy of conservative romanticism, not only a "synthesis of the inhuman and superhuman", but even the very incarnation of "the ancient ideal.. the ideal of nobility par excellence...".

The same contradictions are apparent in Nietzsche's attitude to capitalism. Like the romantics, he was a fierce critic of machine-technology, the modern division of labour, the destruct-

ion of small handicraft production, the depersonalisation of individuals, the belief in large industrial cities - all of these, phenomena which he related, intuitively, to the cultural decay of European society; like them he opposed the lack of culture of the industrial epoch ("the twilight of the arts") to his idealised conception of the haute culture of pre-bourgeois societies. According to Lukacs, "romanticism's critique of bourgeois civilisation lies at the heart of Nietzsche's philosophy and consequently also of his aesthetics". On the other hand, through his passionate and fierce hostility against Christianity, the Church and the clergy ("Crush the villains!"), his brutally individualist ethic of the superman and his rabid opposition to collectivism (against the "herd"), Nietzsche distinguished himself in a radical way from the current of romanticism, and introduced a new dimension into "German ideology". It is not part of the framework of this study to take up a position in the protracted controversy about the Nietzschean "heritage": was he the herald and prophet of imperialism and fascist barbarism? (Lukacs has said so). Or was he, on the contrary, a precursor of anarchism? Here it is enough to note that when a romanticist opposition to capitalism penetrated certain literary and academic circles towards the close of the century, it did so frequently via a Nietzschean ideology.

At that time the cultural critique of capitalism was widespread among German intellectuals generally, and among many writers and poets especially. However, its most intense, systematic and coherent expression was found in the academic circles. Why did the universities become a base of the (romanticist) ideological opposition to capitalism? German universities in general and mainly the branch of disciplines called 'sciences of the spirit' - Geisteswissenschaften - composed of humanities, philosophy, law, history and social science - enjoyed an especially privileged social situation over the 19th century. Through their prestige, influence and social status, these "mandarins", who formed a relatively homogeneous and compact community, occupied a dominant position in the social structure. This pre-eminence of the academic intelligentsia corresponded to a specific phase in the evolution of German society, when the feudal mode of production was losing its dominance but industrial capitalism had still to establish its own hegemony... On the other hand, the form of State corresponding to this process of transition was a traditional but highly bureaucratised monarchy; this naturally worked to the advantage of the mandarins; in fact, university professors controlled the whole system of qualification, probation, examinations, criteria of selection and ideological training required for recruitment into the bureaucracy; in this way they occupied a strategic place in the political and administrative structure of the State. Max Weber compared the German university system to the mandarinism of China and underlined the importance in both cases of a general cultural qualification as one of the criteria for entrance into the State bureaucracy.. The university mandarins thus became the most prestigious spokesmen and representatives of an "educated elite" that extended into the liberal professions, the bureaucracy, the army, etc. In an essay on German universities published in 1902, the academic and neo-kantian philosopher Friedrich Paulsen wrote, "persons with higher education form a sort of intellectual and spiritual aristocracy in Germany.. They form something like a bureaucratic nobility since all of them participate in government and administration.. Together, they compose a homogeneous sector of society, acknowledging each other as socially equal on the basis of their university education.. On the other hand, those who lack a university education lack something that neither wealth nor noble blood can in any sense replace..". In fact, when Paulsen's book appeared, the German academic community was already in decline. The deep changes that were taking place in German society at the turn of the century had seriously cut into the bases of their power. Between 1870 and 1914 Germany became a highly-industrialized country.. passing over directly from a backward capitalism to the imperialist stage.

Obviously this sudden and crushing development of industrial capitalism affected the economic position, forms of life and social and cultural values of the pre-capitalist strata as a whole and the university mandarins in particular. Not only were the traditional cultural values now marginalised, degraded and submerged by exchange-value, by the world of commodities and its purely quantitative criteria, but the specific domain of the academic elite, the German university, was itself progressively subjected to the dictates of the capitalist mode of production. It was Max Weber who analysed this development with quite remarkable lucidity in his famous speech of 1919, "Science as a Vocation": "It is easy to see that in several branches of science, the recent developments in the German university system have realigned it to the course of evolution followed by the American system. The enormous scientific and medical institutes have become enterprises of 'State capitalism'. It is not possible any longer to manage these without considerable resources. And as in all spheres where capitalist enterprise penetrates, here too you find the specifically capitalist phenomenon that ends by 'divorcing the worker from his means of production'. The worker - the research assistant - has no other resources than the means of work put at his disposal by the State. Moreover, the position of the research-assistants is frequently about as precarious as that of the research assistant in American universities, or that of any other 'proletaroid' group. I am personally convinced that this general development will begin to affect even those disciplines where the worker is still owner of his means of work (basically, of his library)... There is a deep gulf, externally and internally, between the head of this sort of large bourgeois university-enterprise and the old-style professorship". This remarkable analysis by Weber makes it easier to grasp the close affinity between the university mandarins and all the various petty-bourgeois strata who were shaken up by the increasingly more oppressive dominance of capitalism - artisans, small traders, smallholding peasants, etc.

How did these mandarins react to the sudden advent of the industrial era and its general tendency to reduce them to a marginal and impotent situation? Profoundly traumatised by the social and cultural impact of the abrupt domination of capitalism, they reacted with "such desperate intensity that practically everything they ever said or wrote, on any subject at all, was haunted by the spectre of the 'soulless' modern world"; their entire thought was defined by "its horror of a standardised and according to them superficial and materialist epoch" (Ringer, Decline of the German Mandarins, 1969).

Thus there appeared towards the end of the century a new and mainly academic version of the romantic opposition to capitalism, whose central underlying obsession was the opposition between Kultur and Zivilisation. While Kultur defined a sphere characterized by ethical, aesthetic and political values, a personal life-style, a typically German 'internal', 'natural', 'organic' spiritual universe, Zivilisation referred to material, technical-economic progress, something quite 'external', 'mechanical', 'artificial' and of English and French origin. This problematic, strongly tainted with conservative romanticism, was developed by Tönnies, Langbehn, Alfred Weber and found its most popular expression (but not its most profound one) in Oswald Spengler's Decline of the West (1918). We should add that this "neo-romanticist" tendency was also quite obvious among many intellectuals outside the universities, and mainly writers, who in their own way shared the preoccupations of the mandarins: Theodor Storm, Stefan George, Paul Ernst and even, to some extent, Thomas Mann. We shall return to them shortly.

On the other hand, however, even while it renovated certain definite themes of the earlier romanticist movement, this turn-of-the-century university opposition to capitalism was distinguished by its "spirit of resignation". An Adam Müller might still have the illusion, after Napoleon's defeat, that the development of bourgeois rationalism could be stopped. But to the most lucid academics of the years 1890-1914 it had already become quite plain

that the growth of industrial capitalism was an irreversible and inevitable phenomenon...

This academic anti-capitalism assumed two principal forms: a reactionary, traditionalist 'orthodoxy' characteristic of the least expressive, politically less nuanced and intellectually less important sectors of the German university establishment; and an "enlightened" or "modernist" "conservatism", more realistic and sophisticated and based chiefly in the social sciences. But the boundary-line between these currents was not always sharply drawn and one could often find them together in movements of a partially anti-capitalist character, the most typical of which would have been the Verein für Sozialpolitik (Association for a social policy). Founded in 1872 by a group of reputable academics, mainly economists, G. Schmoller, A. Wagner and Lujo Brentano - with the participation of Tönnies and Max Weber towards the close of the century - the Verein formed the ideological base of the famous Kathedersozialismus. In reality there was not much "socialism" (in the proletarian or Marxist sense) in their doctrine, but more of a critique of bourgeois individualism, materialist utilitarianism, laissez-faire economics and of the egotistical nature of capitalist activity. In the name of higher ethical values, national greatness, social harmony and the German cultural tradition, it sought to dismiss both Marxism and Manchester liberalism. Their concrete social programme commended an "ethico-social economic orientation" based on State intervention and social reforms. Still, the Verein was not homogeneous in its ideology; at its conservative pole one found Wagner defending the interests of rural Germany against industry, campaigning for higher agrarian tariffs and fervently propagating nationalism and economic "autarchy"; at the opposite pole there was Brentano who campaigned against large agrarian properties, against the raising of agricultural prices, and for conceding to the workers' trade unions a certain role within an "ethically oriented" social policy. Between these poles lay Schmoller, who was an enthusiastic supporter of the monarchy and Prussian bureaucracy - described by him "as the only really neutral forces in the struggle of social classes" - and who stood for a paternalist regime capable of social reforms that could curb the most vicious consequences of the struggle between workers and employers. It is not possible to explain how these different positions could coexist within the Verein if one does not see that they were after all only variants of a common romanticising opposition to capitalism, ideological product of the aspirations and anxieties of a university bureaucracy in crisis.

The "modernist" tendency of opposition to capitalism represented by Brentano found its most systematic, profound and lucid expression in the academic sociology of the turn of the century: "German sociology was the true child of the mandarin's modernism: it becomes impossible to grasp without this specific ancestry; it reflected the pessimistic attitude of the mandarins towards modern social conditions. It was preoccupied with the destructive effects of capitalism on pre-capitalist forms of social organisation. It retraced the disturbing impact of this process on cultural and political life and it posed disquieting questions about human relationships in modern society. In fact, German sociology re-echoed the preoccupations and turmoils that had been central to the social and political theories of romanticist anti-capitalism. But it distinguished itself from the older theories in several important aspects. It was not agrarian or feudal in orientation, because it was not socially linked to the landed aristocracy. A sense of resignation was typical of its 'adaptationist' social theory. Unlike their orthodox colleagues, the modernists understood that there was no final escape from modern civilisation. They agreed to face facts, to accept certain aspects of modern life as inevitable...".

Nevertheless, through their critique of the worst aspects of capitalism, the German sociologists continued to share, like so many romantics at the start of the century, the social and economic preoccupations of the traditional petty-bourgeoisie, to

whom they were tied by numerous bonds of kinship and background, as well as by the "craft" nature of their form of life (eg, artists, writers, poets). The most striking example of this ideological affinity between university-based social science and the average precapitalist strata is the work of one who could justly be regarded as the founder of modern German sociology: Ferdinand Tonnies.

Tonnies was born in 1885 on a small farm in Schleswig-Holstein: his childhood was spent in the countryside, and later, on his father's retirement, he moved to a small maritime town in the same area. From his mother's side he was descended from a family of protestant pastors and on his father's, from an ancient tribe of independent peasants, the Frisians, who had never succumbed to feudal subjugation.

After 1870 capitalist expansion began to affect the traditional agrarian zones like Schleswig-Holstein, where the earlier small peasant form of production began to be replaced by bourgeois agriculture, which dissolved and uprooted little by little the ancient social structures. In Community and Society (1887), a work destined to inspire the whole of German sociology down to the 1930s, Tonnies would produce an abstract opposition between two social-economic worlds regarded as two types of socio-cultural relationships: Community (Gemeinschaft) and Society (Gesellschaft); in place of their respective objective foundations (the economy) he substituted a subjective principle - the "essential" character of "will" in the Community as against its "arbitrary" character in Society. Tonnies argued that the world of the community (village, family, traditional small town) is governed by custom, tradition and rite; work is motivated by pleasure and the love of producing which are expressed in household economy, agriculture and craftsmanship; social relations are characterised by mutual aid and mutual trust and at the head of everything stands Culture (religion, art, morality, philosophy). The world of the Society, by contrast, that is, of the big city, the large nation, etc, is kept in motion by calculation, speculation and profit; material gain is the sole purpose of work which is thus degraded to the condition of a mere means in modern commerce and industry; social life is torn apart by egoism and the Hobbesian war of each against all, in the constant and irreversible process of development of Zivilisation (industrial-technological progress).

Despite its effort at objectivity, Tonnies' work is thoroughly permeated by a deep-seated nostalgia for the traditional agrarian Gemeinschaft (whose underlying prototype was his own birthplace of Schleswig-Holstein): "---the community is the only true and durable form of life in common; society is merely transient and superficial. And there is a sense in which one can see the community as a living organism, and society as a mechanical and artificial aggregate". Tonnies would note the penetration of capitalism into the countryside with a sharp sense of regret. ...

It is obvious that this whole problematic, and especially the contrast between "organic" tradition and modern "artificiality" owes a lot to romanticism, and that one might therefore, without much hesitation, characterise the sociological doctrines of Tonnies as part of the intellectual world of romanticist anti-capitalism. His Gesellschaft is quite clearly bourgeois society grasped from a critical perspective, while Gemeinschaft includes all the precapitalist forms. The contrast is drawn out in the form of an idealisation of the "living" and "natural" societies of the past, over against the "mechanical", impersonal and anticultural character of modern industrial society. Here the entire reflection on society is underpinned by the contradiction between concrete, qualitative values on one side and the process of commodity quantification on the other (cf. romanticism)... And yet, as we stated earlier, like all other German sociologists, Tonnies distanced himself quite sharply from the romanticist worldoutlook by his lucid understanding of the inevitability of capitalism and of the impossible nature of a return to the "organic" past. So in his work the contradiction between culture and civilisation assumed a tragic and insoluble

aspect. I shall return later to this dimension of tragedy in the outlook of the German intelligentsia. Tonnies was finally left with the hope that thanks to trade-unions and consumer co-operatives structures of a community-type might survive in modern industrial society; hence his affinities with the reformist wing of Social-Democracy (which he stayed with down to 1932 as an act of protest against the growth of Nazism).....

* * *

At the turn of the century the main base of sociological thought in Germany was Heidelberg, where a brilliant galaxy of intellectuals and academics gathered around Max Weber. Among the regular or sporadic participants in the famous 'Weber circle at Heidelberg' you find, between 1906 and 1918: the sociologists Tonnies, Werner Sombart, Georg Simmel, Alfred Weber (sociologist of culture, and brother of Max Weber), A. Salz., Robert Michels (at this time a "revolutionary syndicalist"), Ernst Troeltsch (sociologist of religion, and "social-christian" in tendency), P. Honigsheim..the neo-Kantian philosophers W. Windelband, H. Munsterberg and Emil Lask, the neo-hegelians Ehrenberg (a Jew converted to christian mysticism) and Rosenzweig, the jurist Jellinek, the critic F. Gundolf..the pacifist poet Ernst Toller, the psychiatrist and future kierkegaardian philosopher Jaspers, the Dostoyevsky-specialist von Bubnov and two young eschatological dostoyevskians - Ernst Bloch and Georg Lukacs...

Obviously one cannot speak of a common ideology in this motley and disparate collection, but there is no doubt that the circle was shot through by a powerful current of romanticising anti-capitalism. According to the quite illuminating evidence of Honigsheim, "well before the War there was among certain groups a tendency to reject the bourgeois form of life, urban culture, instrumentalist rationality, quantification, scientific specialisation and all other elements regarded as repugnant ...Lukacs and Bloch, Ehrenberg and Rosenzweig were supporters of this tendency. This neo-romanticism, if one can call it that, was linked to the old romanticism by numerous, even if hidden, small channels of influence - to take some examples - Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, the old Schelling, Constantin Frenz..and the Young Movement..In various forms neo-romanticism was represented at Heidelberg..and its supporters knew exactly which door to knock at - Max Weber's"...

In fact, Max Weber himself cannot be classified as a neo-Romantic. His political and ideological position is difficult to define: was he a "liberal", as Merleau-Ponty supposes, or "an active representative of the policy of monopoly capital" as the USSR Academy of Sciences thinks, or a nietzschean aristocrat as J.-M. Vincent suggests? Was he for or against parliamentary democracy, militarism and Social Democracy? Without really wanting to settle the debate, I'd only like to draw attention to a certain "elective affinity", despite many important differences, between Weber's sociology and the romanticist opposition to capitalism. J.-M. Vincent correctly characterizes Weber's ideology as "a sort of precarious humanism, antithetical to the fundamental tendencies of social development...", a pessimism that obstinately rejected certain features of the modern world that was developing (see Vincent, in *Fetishism and Society*, Paris, 1974). From this perspective there can be no doubt that he was profoundly influenced by Tonnies, whose categories and analyses he frequently took up, including his critique of capitalism, though more by way of an attempt to transcend them towards a more objective vision of modern social reality.

In Weber resignation in the face of the advent of (bourgeois) industrial society is more sharply outlined than in Tonnies: one has to accept capitalism "not because it seems to us better than earlier forms of society, but because it is practically inevitable". This did not preclude a nostalgic regret at the passing of an "enchanted" precapitalist world and its ethical and cultural values.. Above all, it did not preclude his critique, developed with 1

(but elitist) pessimism, of the growing domination over men of the bureaucratic apparatus, a cold, "rational", impersonal, inhuman machine: "Imagine the consequences of this general bureaucratisation and rationalisation which we draw closer to everyday. Today rational calculation (Rechenhaftigkeit) is obvious at each phase in every private enterprise of largescale industry as in all other enterprises directed by modern criteria. Through this, the output of every worker can be calculated with mathematical exactness and each individual becomes a small part of the machine..it is horrible to think that one day the world will be full of such small 'parts'...."

Weber's characterisation of the bourgeois mentality, in his Protestant Ethic, is close to those proposed by the neo-romantics, even when it carefully avoids any explicit value-judgements. "Man is dominated by the activity of making money, by acquisitiveness as the supreme goal in life. Economic gain is no longer subordinated to man as a means of satisfying his natural needs. This reversal of what we may call the natural relationship, so irrational from a naive point of view, is obviously the definitive principle regulating capitalism - as much as it is one foreign to peoples not subjected to the influence of capitalism".

Without this dimension of opposition to capitalism, which of course is only one aspect of a complex, nuanced and sometimes contradictory system of theory, it is difficult to understand some things, such as Weber's sympathy for trade-unions: "They are the only institutions of Social-Democracy that have not fallen in value and that safeguard a certain idealism in the face of the party's dullness..In our German conditions the unions will remain the last refuge of idealist work and idealist conviction within the Social-Democratic party". Is it possible to explain Weber's sympathy by the fact that "the trade-union movement went much further than" the party itself "in rejecting revolutionary ideology", that is, by the pragmatic realism of its leadership, as Vincent argues? In my view, Weber's meaning was the exact opposite; how else does one understand his emphasis on the unions' "idealism" as against the party's "dullness"? According to Eduard Baumgarten, to Weber the trade unions constituted precisely a counterpoise to the embourgeoisment and bureaucratisation of the party, a standpoint that brought him close to his "revolutionary syndicalist" pupil Robert Michels. Elsewhere Michels himself draws attention to Weber's interest in his ideas and to the Archiv fur Sozialwissenschaft opening its pages to the syndicalist tendency, with the publication of articles by Lagardelle, Labriola..etc. Finally, according to the characteristically revealing and penetrating evidence of Honigsheim, Weber's outlook drew him close to "the anarchists and above all the Bergsonian syndicalists" ...

Probably the most important and influential "visitor" at Weber's circle was Georg Simmel, with whom Lukacs, Bloch and Karl Mannheim studied in Berlin. According to Lukacs (in 1953) Simmel's thought should also be seen as an expression of the intelligentsia's dissatisfaction with capitalism, and located in the general context of the critique of bourgeois culture. (My interest in Lukacs' own assessments of his contemporaries is due to two obvious reasons; (1) the historical and social depth of his analyses, despite their one-sided character..and (2) the fact that I am interested mainly in the link between intellectuals like Weber, Simmel, Tonnies, etc, and Lukacs' work...).

Thus it is not accidental that in one of Simmel's major works, The Philosophy of Money (1900), the central underlying motif is the growing preponderance of quantity over quality, the tendency for the latter to be dissolved in the former, and the tendency to replace every specific, individual, qualitative determination by a simple numerical determination - tendencies whose most striking expression Simmel saw in the increasingly oppressive domination of money over social life. Thanks to this

universal venality, not only all objects, but even values that are in principle non-quantifiable, such as honour, conviction, talent, virtue, beauty...become commodities, or acquire a "market price". Prostitution is the highest form of this commercialisation of human values, a form that manifests in its very being the fundamental nature of money, its cold impersonality, its reduction of the human being to the position of simple means.

Capitalism, Simmel argues, is based on the transformation of human labour (travail) itself into a commodity, into an object that stands opposed to the worker, becomes alien to him and possesses its own laws of motion. The entire universe of bourgeois production appears as a cosmos governed by its own specific laws independent of individuals and their will. These analyses plainly remind us of the Marxist problematic of commodity-fetishism, but the difference is that for Simmel the phenomenon that Marx investigates is only a "special case" of the "tragedy of culture", that is, of the alienation of objective culture from subjective culture, the growth of a culture of things and the decline of a culture of persons. Through this bias, Marx's concrete and historically specific economic analysis is transformed into, or rather dissolved in a tragic vision of the world, an ahistorical psycho-sociology, a profoundly metaphysical philosophy of culture.

It is not possible to refer to the tragic metaphysical vision without passing on immediately to the poet and dramatist Paul Ernst. He kept company with Simmel over 1895/7 and was the person to whom Lukacs dedicated his celebrated essay of 1910, 'The metaphysics of tragedy'. Parallel to neo-classical tragedies on medieval or teutonic themes, which attracted Lukacs' interest and sympathy, Ernst wrote a large number of aesthetic or literary essays in which he developed the whole problematic of romanticist anti-capitalism: the disintegration of community-values, the growing depersonalisation and mechanisation of modern society, etc. Again, the dominant theme is the opposition between Culture and Civilisation...Ernst's ideological trajectory from the end of the 19th century to his death in 1933 is a strange journey, but one typical of the anti-capitalist radicalism of the German intellectuals of this period. Around 1888 he joined the Social-Democratic party and carried on an active correspondence with Engels on political and literary matters...in 1891 he supported a left, semi-anarchist faction of the SPD, known as "the Youth", composed mainly of intellectuals...and ended by leaving the party. In 1892 he collaborated with the "agrarian socialist" Rudolf Mayer in editing a work entitled Capitalism at the end of the Century, but soon left politics to devote himself to his literary activities. Around 1908/10 he wrote neo-classical tragedies and became a friend of Lukacs, exchanging letters with him over 1911 to 1926. Finally, after 1917, he passed over increasingly to a nationalist and ultra-conservative politico-literary ideology, whose perfected expression is his book Kaiserbuch, a hymn glorifying the German Reich of the middle ages. (It is curious that Lukacs in his Brief History of German Literature, 1944, is quite generous with the adjective "precursor of fascism", using it left and right, but carefully avoids any mention of Ernst. Did he forget, was he too embarrassed, or simply indulgent to an old friend?)

On the other hand, even in his reactionary period, Ernst made opposition to capitalism central to his thought; in an essay published in 1926 he recalled with nostalgia the "organic" world uprooted by capitalism and industry, and denounced the world dominated by Capital as a "meaningless barbarism". It is worth emphasising that in 1926 or 27 Lukacs wrote him a letter about this article, the last one in their voluminous correspondence, in which the bolshevik militant still found some ground on which he could communicate with the conservative poet...

This ideological ambiguity or hermaphroditism, this surprising tendency to pass from one extreme to the other, this apparent incoherence of the romanticising opposition to capitalism achieved its most perfect expression in the "syndicalist" sociologist Michels, also part of Weber's circle. Starting in 1903 Michels began to organise, in the university town of Marburg, what he later called "an underground tendency, of syndicalist orientation, within German socialism". It was composed basically of students and academics, whose ideology contained unequal doses of Marx, Kant and Tolstoy. Michels and his friends ferociously attacked the mediocre parliamentarism and routinism of German Social Democracy, its lack of energy and of political vigour. To them the SPD was, in an incisive image forged by Michels, "a giant which, despite the great size of its limbs, is incapable of 'laying' a virgin". The young sociologist then looked for political references elsewhere and ended by establishing political and personal links with the Italian (Arturo Labriola, Enrico Leone) and French (Sorel, Lagardelle...etc) syndicalists. He also started to participate in the Weber circle at Heidelberg, where he enjoyed the friendship and benevolent protection of Sombart and Max Weber himself. A friend of Weber's, the 'Social Christian' leader Friedrich Naumann, described Michels in 1911 as an "idealist", a "revolutionary romantic" "who walks boldly on the boundary-line between Social Democracy and Anarchism".

In 1907 Michels attended the Congress of the socialist International at Stuttgart, as delegate from the syndicalist fraction of its Italian section. There he met his syndicalist friends whom he described as "in truth, a select society with enormous intellectual capacity and European renown". In fact, behind its academic homogeneity there lurked an important difference: in contrast to the Italian or French varieties, German "revolutionary syndicalism" had practically no links with the workers' movement; it was basically an intellectual current, or, rather, one based in the universities. In the last analysis it turns out to have been a quite marginal expression of the academics' opposition to capitalism.

In 1907 Michels broke his remaining links with the socialist movement and two years later published his celebrated work on the sociology of political parties, which had the undoubted merit of being one of the first serious attempts at an analysis of the phenomenon of bureaucracy in the workers' movement. At first glance this work appears to be a "left radical" (ultra-left) critique of the anti-democratic and conservative character of the SPD bureaucracy. In fact, Michels' trajectory was inspired by the elitist ideology of Pareto and Mosca: oligarchic concentration of power in any party is an "inexorable social law", a consequence of the "objective lack of maturity of the masses"; "the existence of leaders is a phenomenon inherent in all forms of social life", and it follows that "the absolute ideal would be an aristocracy of ethically sound and technically capable persons" (Michels, Political Parties).

Michels' ideological evolution reached a new stage by 1912, with the publication of a series of essays on Italian syndicalism; there he proposed the thesis of an Italian "proletarian imperialism", propagated by the 'national syndicalists' (and direct precursors of fascism) Enrico Corradini, Arturo Labriola, and Paolo Orano. The road was now open to Michels' direct passing over into the ranks of the fascist university establishment. On Mussolini's personal invitation, he would become professor of sociology at the University of Perugia...

An analysis of intellectuals close to revolutionary syndicalism in France falls outside the scope of this study. Here it is enough to emphasise the romantic/anti-capitalist character of the ideology of the group that gathered around the magazine Mouvement socialiste (Sorel, Lagardelle, Berth, etc), and which came to a provisional understanding with the CGT - a trade union organisation which, prior to 1914, embraced mainly a skilled craft proletariat whose form of life and

and social survival were threatened by modern industry and the concentration of capital that was occurring in France around the turn of the century. Through their rejection of parliament, their opposition to democracy, their irrationalist (Bergsonian) idealism, and their acceptance of traditional moral values, one section of this group would end up joining the Action française in 1910; later, some of them would follow in Michels' footsteps and become fascists (eg Lagardelle) or at least have sympathy for Mussolini's prowess (Sorel) - whereas the workers in the CGT would mainly gravitate to the young Communist Party. However, we should not overlook the deep ambivalence built into their ideology, which Berth would later define as containing "a tragic vision of the world anticipated by Proudhon, Nietzsche, Marx, Bergson and Sorel". An ambivalence that accounts on the one side for Berth's own pro-Communist tendencies after the war, on the other for Sorel's bizarre and confused defence of Lenin' in 1919.

Likewise in Germany fascism (or the reactionary camp) was the not the only arrival-point for those intellectuals, writers and academics who opposed capitalism from the romantic position. If you take Max Weber's Heidelberg circle as a point of reference, considering that it was one of the main centres of expansion of such a tendency, you will find in it a "left wing" that went over to revolutionary Marxism and supported the Bolsheviks in the post-war period. This "Heidelberg left" gave the communist movement a great Marxist philosopher, with a utopian and messianic vision - Ernst Bloch; a poet, dramatist and leader of the Red Army in the Republic of Bavarian Councils (1919) - Ernst Toller; and finally, the greatest Marxist philosopher of the 20th century and Commissar in the Hungarian Republic - George Lukacs...

Toller represented the revolutionary-expressionist development of the romantic opposition to capitalism. His early political education took place around 1916/17, with Max Weber at Heidelberg.. Later he came under the utopian influence of the great anarcho-socialist thinker Gustav Landauer..who wanted to replace the capitalist city by a rural Gemeinschaft (community), a socialist village that would be at once industrial and agricultural and founded on a preservation, renewal and further development of peasant traditions. Initially simply a pacifist..Toller would after the war revolt in the name of this burning pacifism against bourgeois economy and the bourgeois State, false idols that demanded an unlimited sacrifice of human lives. Arrested during a workers' demonstration against the War, Toller produced in jail, in 1917/18, a romanticist-expressionist play that made him famous (The Change).. Toller's participation in the 'Munich Commune' shows how, despite their confusion and ideological limitations, such expressionist and neo-romanticist tendencies could attain to a genuinely revolutionary dimension.

In a celebrated essay on The Greatness and Decline of Expressionism (1934) Lukacs draws out the internal affinity of this current of art to the romanticising critique of capitalism, and especially to its critique of bourgeois culture, eg, in the form in which it was developed by Simmel in The Philosophy of Money. Furthermore, Lukacs attempts to define the relations between expressionism and the ideology of the U.S.P.D, citing Toller himself as a typical case of their unity. But in a specious and one-sided manner, Lukacs sees in these two movements (political and artistic) nothing but "the petty-bourgeoisie's hesitation in the face of an imminent proletarian revolution..its fear of revolutionary 'chaos'"....Lukacs deliberately ignores the fact that when the U.S.P.D disappeared at the Halle Congress of 1920, this was so because the majority of its delegates agreed on fusion with the German Communist party, a party which Toller joined after several years in jail for his role in the Bavarian Republic, and which attracted many other expressionist writers.

Lukacs' schematic tendency is all the more striking when he claims that "expressionism was without doubt one of the many bourgeois-ideological currents that would later culminate in fascism...". Three years after Lukacs' essay appeared, the Nazis organized the notorious exhibition of 'degenerate Art', and in this practically every well-known expressionist picture figured. In a note that Lukacs would add to his original article, many years later, he proclaimed with the same sense of assurance, "The fact that Nazism later rejected expressionism as 'degenerate Art' changes nothing in the historical accuracy of the analysis given here". The least one can say is that a historical analysis that ignored the revolutionary dimension of expressionism and reduced it to a precursor of Nazi ideology can hardly be called 'accurate'...

.... In the character 'Leon Naphta' (of the novel Magic Mountain) Thomas Mann crystallised the 'fascinating double meaning' of romanticism, pushing both opposed meanings of this matrix to their respective extremes. The thesis I have tried to present above on the ideological hermaphroditism of the romantic opposition to capitalism is magnificently illustrated in the personality of this Jesuit Communist who comprises in his own person, but juxtaposed, combined and sometimes mixed up with each other, the two extreme tendencies that could develop from a common source. In the light of this interpretation it is possible to understand the contradictory statements of Mann himself on the relation between Lukacs and his character Naphta, as well as the insights contained in the (opposing) views proposed by Lukacs /Naphta is a fascist, he prefigures fascist ideology/ and by Bourdet /Naphta is a communist disguised in priest's clothes, he is Lukacs/. Their mistake lies precisely in not grasping the contradictory unity of neo-romanticism as the ideological key to this character.

On this basis one can actually understand the strange and surprising suicide of Naphta in the course of his duel with Settembrini, an act which gives to the melancholic Jesuit a tragic dimension. The anticapitalist romanticism of pre-1914 was a tendency without any decisive result, one that tended towards despair and towards a tragic vision of the world. In a letter of 1917 Mann himself spoke of his idea of opposing to the liberal-republican Settembrini a character defined by a "reactionary and cynical despair". Naphta's 'despair' belongs to the 'ideological climate' of all the main pre-war writings of Thomas Mann: the atmosphere that permeates the gigantic decline of Buddenbrooks or the morbid decay of Death in Venice. In fact, a similar tendency is possible to discern in various forms and to different degrees in most of the neo-romantic writers - Storm, Stephan George, Paul Ernst. ...

On the other hand, this 'tragic consciousness' was not confined to literature, it permeated the whole German intelligentsia that moved into opposition to capitalism from Romanticist positions, and especially the university sociologists. I have already dealt with the dimension of tragedy in the thought of Tonnies, with the profound social pessimism of Max Weber, with Simmel's problem-atic of the tragedy of culture. One could add to the list Scheler's conception of history as a permanent decline of values, or the theme of cultural decay in writers otherwise as diverse as Alfred Weber, Werner Sombart and Oswald Spengler. ...

The basic aspects of this tragic vision were (1) a metaphysical formulation of the problem of alienation, of reification and commodity-fetishism.. (2) A neo-kantian duality between the spheres of values and reality, between the spiritual realm and the sphere of social and political life.. (3) The profound sense of 'intellectual impotence' in the face of a 'massified', uncouth, barbarous-civilised, crudely materialist society. To sum up, the tragic vision of the world of the turn-of-century German intelligentsia was the combined result of (i) a more or less deep opposition between ethico-cultural or social-political values and the rapid and brutal process of development of a monopolistic industrial capitalism in Germany; and (ii) complete despair about the possibility of containing or preventing this process, which they came to see as an irreversible 'fate'.

(i)

AN IMMEDIATE STRATEGY FOR MILITANTS - DISCUSSION.

Introduction.

In the discussion that follows A and C are both workers with several years of a rich and varied experience of class struggle behind them. Both are militants who have been victimised within the last one year - A. from a largescale engineering plant, probably the most modern and world-competitive one of its type in India, and C. from a medium-scale chemical factory. To appreciate the central role that the question plays in this discussion, you should bear in mind that victimisation and blacklisting have become a regular practice with Indian employers. They form both a conscious practice of oppression on the part of the individual capitalist and an institutionalised, legally sanctioned procedure for preserving or establishing quiescent and peaceful 'labour relations' in modern industry.

The fact is that relations in largescale industry have been continuously revolutionised over the last ten years due to the fantastic pressure of modernisation exerted by the world market and world competition of capitals on the individual capitalist in India. This pressure of modernisation invades and takes over every single aspect related to the production and accumulation of surplus-value - from the renovation of capital through the introduction of new machinery and new machine systems, and the accompanying reorganisations of the labour-process, through to the latest management techniques and a systematic re-structuring of the hierarchy of control and supervision within the factory. The sole purpose and final aim of this process of total modernisation is of course the drive to extort an ever greater mass of surplus-value, whose realisation is being increasingly and ever more rapidly rechannelised into the world market.

The intensified exploitation of labour-power in the new cycle of capital accumulation implies an ability on the part of the capitalist to be able to forestall and control workers' reactions. Here three aspects have become crucial - victimisation, or the systematic weeding out of militants and their blacklisting by local employers; the conscious attempt to smash militant unions and promote management-sponsored leaderships within the factory; and legislation banning strikes, directly or indirectly, to ensure continuity of production.

This employers' strategy implies, obversely, the emergence of a whole layer of militants through the struggles of the last ten years - militants who could sustain both those very struggles and the unions resulting from them, but who are today being forced out of the ranks of the organised working-class. To K. this forms a decisive aspect - through victimisation the capitalists attempt to break the link between a potential class leadership and the mass of the class; can this layer, today hardly conscious of its role, be transformed into a real class leadership? Can the militant who is driven from the factory-gates, who is forced to begin the depressing and futile search for an alternative factory-job, who is compelled to break his links with his former comrades in the factory & can this militant be won for the struggle? If so, how? And with what programme?

Like K., C. is a militant of this type, hounded out by the employer despite a resistance of five months by all the workers of his factory. But to C. the building of a mass base among the workers forms the central objective of any Communist policy. Both K. and C. visualise a single process - the formation of the proletariat of India into a revolutionary class; but they isolate different moments of this process as immediately crucial.

The difference of emphasis that underlies their views of the same process implies, in germ form, quite distinct conceptions of the immediate tasks of Communists in the present stage of the class movement. Ultimately, not thought, but action, the testing of ideas in practice, will decide between them.

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K: C. has pointed out that victimisation is a problem for the growth of the working-class movement and up to now there is no remedy for that, to solve that problem.

C: What I really meant was something different. If we speak generally, then it's true, victimisation is widespread in many factories and has often occurred in the past. At present, the workers who sympathised with us and worked with us, even these workers, after their victimisation, could receive no alternative from us regarding their own situation. We could not provide them with a practical alternative. And so they feel frustrated and they leave their line. This is the situation that concretely faces us, and we have to know what solution there is for this situation. This is what the discussion should be about. What should we do?

K: Right, In fact, this is the question we discussed earlier. As far as victimisation goes, it has become the great right of every single management throughout the country to be able to isolate the activists or militants from the mass of workers, to put a stop to their flow of work, because it is this flow of work that is badly interrupted by management. It is why they attempt to isolate militants by victimising them. Now in this way a lot of their plans also come to an end. Managements' own plans are not affected, on the contrary, they put a stop to the workers who ran the movement in the past. So what we have to do is to find the kind of solution which ensures that, whatever the conditions, the militants are never isolated from the workers, and management never gains from the victimisations which it consciously plans. Because the real solution here is to keep the militants within the movement. The point is - how can they remain in the same field and develop their programme further? Now here one problem immediately arises - about his job, his existence, who will help him? As things stand today, victimised workers stay with other workers for a few days, but in the long run these workers are not able to feed even a single victimised militant. A second problem is that a lot of victimisation has been going on, it happens on a major scale, but supposing ten workers are thrown out of a factory, at least one or two of those workers can become a firm leadership, can work for class solidarity, can organise workers, but we cannot expect the workers of that factory to feed all ten workers for ever, only one or two of them can survive in the movement in this way. So my proposal was that we should form an organisation of victimised workers, which can make a permanent contribution to the workers' movement. The second point is that among the victimised workers there is a definite quality, a definite talent, a definite strength - the capitalist is afraid of this and therefore victimises. So this strength we must not allow to be finished off there and then - we have to increase this strength even when it has been pushed out of the factory. Now supposing...

C: Just a minute. Victimisation has been occurring in every factory, but what is the main problem? We could have helped the victimised workers only if we had an organisation, a political organisation, that could have helped them, and this presupposes that they would have been working as part of this organisation. The problem arises today only because no such organisation has been built. That is my understanding. Without such an organisation, I can't understand what 'assistance' could mean.

K: But in today's conditions there is no such organisation, that's what I'm saying. In fact, workers who attack management with some political understanding behind them are the first to be thrown out. Today the CITU has rejected you, your organisation, i.e. CITU, has rejected you. That is also my condition today.

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C: No, but there's some reason behind why CITU rejected me. If I had agreed with them politically, then they would have kept me on today as well, obviously.

K: This means that, whatever the conditions, you yourself are responsible for looking after your own independent existence. Because workers, those who fight for workers and think like workers, can never carry on their work by surrendering to political parties they disagree with. On this point we are in total agreement. Now in such conditions, there is no organisation that can look after you. This is why some of us in P. have worked out a plan to produce a list of all workers victimised there over the last five or six years, to establish an organisation, a sort of credit-society, through the collective effort of all victimised workers. In such an organisation, once you have created a programme, you can help victimised workers who are in any sort of distress, workers outside will also help them, and wherever there are workers' struggles you can support them, you can work for them, you can also develop your programme within the unions themselves. But the organisation we build in this way - what should be its line? What will its policy be? On what basis can its division of work and its work, its programme, be developed within the movement itself? This requires collective thought, collective reflection. So in the first place...

C: I have a point. This plan which you have been thinking about - it seems to me that for the time being workers will make contributions, for one month, two months, three months maximum, will definitely give something, will help you, because you have made sacrifices for them, but in the long term it is very difficult. So for this reason, this is my experience, until and unless we start creating a political organisation, start preparing political sympathisers, start developing the political maturity of the workers, we cannot really take any help from them - whether it's financial help or any kind of help you like.

K: But I didn't mean that you should take money from the workers. No, as far as the organisation of victimised workers goes, the question of help in the form of money doesn't even arise. The point is that once this organisation has been built, then we can make a collective contribution on the basis of the organisation itself, to educating workers, building a revolutionary party. Today we are reflecting in isolation, whereas we can throw in the collective effort of a large number of workers, of the victimised workers of that area, of P, for example. We can draw them together into one place through an organisation. Then we will make them think.

C: But why don't you try to unite workers through struggle? If you unite workers through struggle, then the few workers you draw in through this, even if only two, four, five, ten workers, who give you five rupees every month, they will be the biggest help.

K: But for that too you need a collective effort, a capacity to struggle...

C: But that's something you create through struggle, obviously.

K: The organisation can do that, through struggle, in a better manner. This is my assessment. Today the victimised workers who are around have contributions to make, they have some money, we can put this together and start some business, for our own existence. And together with that, this organisation can start a process of collective reflection, it can make a collective contribution to the struggles.

C: No, whatever you're saying about this 'business'...

K: By 'business' I mean...

C: Yes, any occupation one likes, a shop, whatever...

K: But something collective.

C: Yes, in this collective project you'll find that a lot of differences arise, disputes begin about money, about this, that and the other, whereas your real work will suffer tremendously. This is my practical experience. When you start an organisation of victimised workers it is better to start by asking, why were we victimised? For what reason? And why, after being victimised, are we sitting idle like this? If you start by explaining about the State machinery, State power, character, etc., etc., then set up an organisation and prepare these workers for struggles, and then, in this context, you tell them 'Look, brothers, before we can fight we need something for our own subsistence, so if you help, then we can do our work,' in this way you will create sympathisers and even be able to put funds together. You'll get funds. If this is how you proceed, then your political work will go well, the organisation of workers there will also function properly. That's what I think.

K: Today the workers complain that the militants who have been thrown out are not active. Some of them are active, of course, but they have to depend on the other trade unions for their programme of work, they cannot develop this further, this is their limitation, isn't it? They too want to remain politically free. So the organisation is intended to make those militants who are idle today, active again, so they can make some contribution to the coming movement, workers' movement. The second point is that one of the biggest questions in our area is that what is really happening in the factories nearby the workers of this or that factory don't get to know. So by starting an organisation like this, we can begin some newspaper, some newsbulletin, etc. This organisation and its cadre will work with a class perspective. The society, etc. is secondary. Another point is that the movement starts in new factories, new militants come into the struggle, but upto now there has been no one to welcome them once they have been victimised. So today we are prepared to welcome them.

C: The question arises, what will be the programme of this organisation of militants?

K: Its main area-programme will be to organise unorganised labour. Secondly, wherever struggles break out, there our cadre can give full-time assistance to the workers in the struggle. We can go, as an organisation, to the big factory or the small factory and declare our support to the workers, participate in the planning of that struggle with them. Militants who have a rich experience of struggle can make a contribution to these new struggles from their experience itself. My main intention is this. In every place, in every industrial area, there is a lot of unorganised labour, and that too mainly in small and middle sized industry. These workers face especially high rates of exploitation, many times higher than those that fall on organised workers. An organisation developed to fight against this will be ready to fight the government with the mass support of workers, when necessary. My idea is that we organise the unorganised workers and begin to resist the heavy exploitation that these workers face. Automatically our programme will develop, our links with the mass of workers will multiply, and even if the militants thrown out of this or that factory don't know much about other factories, they know enough about their own factory, and they can explain what they know to other workers, and whatever goes on in the union of this or that factory can be gathered and communicated to all workers through a news bulletin, our people can go to each place of work and collect reports, write up these reports, by way of educating workers, of increasing their understanding. This is my main objective. Because today the working-class has no local newspapers of its own. At the very minimum we should be able to handle our own local news, week by week, whereas at the moment, even month after month one doesn't know what is happening.

G: But unless there is a programme for at least the coming one or two years, no organisation can be sustained, it will develop around a single issue and collapse when the issue passes.

C: That's exactly why I am putting the main emphasis here. It has been my experience, I've seen how a kamgar ekta samiti was established as early as 72 and how it disintegrated subsequently, what kind of difficulties it ran into, what its drawbacks were. After seeing this

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I came to realise that until and unless you educate workers politically, and workers come to feel, this is our organisation, we have to sustain it, unless we sustain it, we shall continue to be oppressed and exploited - unless workers begin to think in these terms, and think of supporting your cadre because they want to keep the organisation alive - then whatever you do, nothing will happen.

K: Let me explain. You haven't taken into account why in today's conditions we have to think about an organisation of victimised workers at all. Victimised workers come out of the different working class organisations. Now, whatever the conditions, the basic point is that these victimised workers must remain fulltimers in their respective organisations, and it is they who must determine the programme of those organisations, and because this is not happening in the trade unions, our victimised workers, the militant ones, have had to stay outside the movement. You talk about a political party that can face victimisation and give shelter to victimised workers, but as long as no such party exists, at least the organisation I am talking about is absolutely necessary. In fact, if such an organisation were formed, it would make some contribution of its own to any future class-conscious organisation such as you have in mind. But because today this organisation is not actually being built, victimised workers have become isolated and have had to stay outside. Secondly, if this organisation is going to carve out a place in the class, it will have to work around definite issues, it will have to become a hard-working organisation, its reputation will have to grow among workers through the work that it does, this is the only basis on which it can consolidate itself. As long as we are within the class itself and have such an organisation, we shall gain support in ever stratum of the proletariat.

C: I'd like to explain something. Recently I faced a problem. What was it? Some workers approached me from my factory and said, "look, we'll give you some money on a monthly basis, you work for our union fulltime". I said, fair enough, I have no objections. But what did the strike-breakers and chamchas in the factory say? What propaganda did they carry on? Throughout the area? That C. is now finding it difficult to make ends meet, he's lost his job, what else can he do? he has to keep some fighting going on, start a union, etc, etc. And who said this? Precisely those workers who don't do anything, never make any contributions, never help. And what about the workers in general? I told them, look, I don't need to take a single paisa from you in order to help you - try me and see if I don't work for the union of my own will. After that I started to work part-time and those chamcha elements kept quiet. They don't have anything to say. There are some workers who are prepared to help whenever it's necessary, they come home if someone's ill, they bring medicines, do something for you. These workers do this from their sense of involvement, they participate in struggles with me, stay with me, they help without saying a word. They won't even ever criticise you! As far as I'm concerned, taking help from these workers is o.k.

K: That's o.k. but...

C: Now see, the company stopped my three hundred rupees, the subscription allowance, they're not giving it. So till today I haven't gone to the company's gates to ask, look, why haven't you given the money to me? Against me there's a 500 feet injunction order, I can't step within this radius of 500 feet, if I do, the police will arrest me. In spite of this I go, I take gate meetings. They bring civil suits against me. By acting like this I show them, they can bring court injunctions against me, they can stop my money, but my work will never stop. Why did I bring up this incident? Because one constantly has to face propaganda, this is something that never stops, so sometimes you have to

take a stand like that, to say, 'I don't give a damn, I'll stand on my own feet, just watch and see if I don't work for you,' in order to give them confidence. Understand? The workers shouldn't feel, look, he didn't help us, he went off, he left us in the lurch, etc., such ideas should never occur to them. This is why, whether they help or not, it is always my duty to help the movement and be with it. As for the organisation you're talking about, I don't know much about the movement in your area. This is why I don't want to say much about it. If you think it is necessary, then my advice would be, go ahead and try it. See what happens, or doesn't happen. I won't say, don't do it. I've already put forward my suggestion.

K: I've understood. If every militant were like you, then no one would leave, they would remain in the field. The situation today is not like that - 99% of militants become fed up and demoralised and leave, but we should retain them, with them we have to create workers' organisations develop political consciousness and build a revolutionary party.

C: Look, even in my area there are a lot of victimised workers. A lot of chaps work at patrol pumps, in garages, some get money from the company in one way or another. They survive. We meet together. If they want to see a film, they approach the workers on pay day and say, let's get some money together. Can you believe it? Here they are without work, and they're saying, we must see a film today, we must eat today, you've got your pay, what the hell are you doing with it! There are such chaps even today. You know H? He's working in a garage, he hasn't left his politics till today. There are many days when he doesn't eat at all. I feed him, take him to a hotel, or the other workers from the factory take him. If I have any money left, I give him. Like this there are a lot of workers today who haven't left their line.

K: In that case you're saying that there is more political consciousness among the victimised workers in your area. That's not the situation in my area. Very few of the workers who have been victimised there, not even 2%, are still active in the unions today. Those who are active, are active with the help of the other, organised unions, the various political groups. This they don't want, but it's a matter of their existence, and they want to retain their links with the movement.

C: I don't have any disagreement with this. If that's the situation there, then you try, see what problems you come up against, what gains you make, how much benefit you get. Try and see.

V: The two formulations strike me as quite different. As far as C is concerned, only the class movement can resolve the problem of existence for victimised workers, no society or business can do it. The workers who are not politically mature will drag this society or business or whatever in a different direction. That's what he wants to say. How will we face this?

K: See, still there's some difference in understanding. What have I been trying to say? You want to develop your work in the factories, develop the consciousness of workers, intensify the class struggle in their ranks, build a class organisation. But with what practical means will you go into the class to carry this out?

C: Precisely for this we started an area-wide Kamgar Ekta Samiti. Why did we establish it area-wise? Because we realised that we cannot unite the movement on an individual basis, each from a different union, and because workers from other factories cannot participate in the movements of this or that company. This is why the associations which the managements have can suppress the workers, and smash individual strikes quite easily. Realising this we brought workers together and formed the KES. Only through this committee can we develop the struggles in the area, develop the workers there, give workers political education, carry on the process of reflection, etc., only through this organisation, which is a class organisation, can all this be done. Obviously the workers who come to this organisation, who want to help financially, to support the victimised workers, obviously we should take their help.

E: In this the participation of the victimised workers will be less. Those who are already active in the field will come to the area committee. They'll bring up the problems that face them. The workers who come from different factories will bring up their own problems. Here the workers who have become inactive, who have been victimised, will not become active.

C: There are many victimised workers who will never become active. They have been victimised for a variety of reasons. You know M, the victimised worker? He sits in God's temples, in Akola or Amravati or wherever. He's a victimised worker, he's fought a lot. But you tell him about Marxism, he'll tell you, I have no need for all that, you keep that to yourself! If you want to break someone's head in, tell me, I'll come. Got it? What will you tell such workers? What will you do with them? Look, only those victimised workers who are in the field today will stay with you, will fight with you. If you try to draw in all the victimised workers in the world, you won't be able to form an organisation and no organisation will ever be formed.

K: The other point is that if in P. such an organisation were to be built, then initially, on the basis of an immediate programme, such an organisation can take the leadership of an area committee, it can take on the responsibility of organising an area committee. Because today area committees in Pune emerge periodically and disintegrate. An area committee is formed around one issue, when that issue is over, the committee is over. On the other hand, if you want to form an area committee on a permanent basis and give it some programme, then such an organisation could definitely make its contribution to that. But what is our main interest? To run some workers' news service. We can contact the main 15-20 activists in the area, we can retain this contact with them: what is happening in Bajaj Auto today? What production difficulties do workers face there? What is the issue in Telco? in Wanson? in Swastik? We can gather this information together, and this we can present to workers, in a total picture, at least every week.

A. K is proposing a concrete programme to create organisations of unorganised workers or to share whatever information there is about the struggles that break out...

G. Can this be part of an area committee's programme?

C: Yes. But look, in a factory area, an industrial area, there are not only unorganised workers, there are slum dwellers, there are many problems, social problems. The point is not simply to organise the unorganised workers, you'll have to create a programme by surveying all the problems area-wise, and we'll also have to ask how it is possible to develop mass movements in that area.

J: It seems to me there's a danger in this. Because so far there is nothing to suggest that this entire process is not completely localist. In the sense that if your main concentration is an area, building a mass movement in an area, then it is obvious that it takes time to build a mass movement. All your attention, all your energies are concentrated in one way or another, at one level or another, from education to involvement in social issues in residential areas, on the area itself. Now what is missing is any conception of education of education through this process of struggle which can actually involve communication with workers elsewhere. About the problems of the class movement as a whole, about the next step forward. Because what C would then be compelled to argue is that this process must first take place on a local basis, in most areas, before we can pose the question of class unity, in an organisational sense. As if there are two 'stages' - first stage, this kind of experience must be repeated on a local basis, and who is to say how long it will take? Because it's a matter of building a mass movement on an area basis. And you cannot just build a mass movement through gradual, molecular work. A mass movement depends on definite conditions. Whether a mass movement is possible in a given area does not depend merely on the kind of work which is being done. Because mass movements are not the result of systematic, week-by-week work. Mass movements are the result of

other things as well. Mass movements may break out before you even build your cadre force. You may not be in a position to relate to those movements, to lead them forward. You'll have no programme, you'll have no perspective. So what is missing in this picture is anything like the tasks of a communist worker in terms of the current stage of the class struggle. Anything like organisation between areas, anything like the next step forward, anything like communication between militants. A workers' bulletin, for example.

C: See, if you want to work with a long-term perspective, then it is necessary to ask how we can organise the class and develop the movement by facing the individual situations of the different strata. I don't believe that if you take up slum problems, or launch agitations against repression, then you are building up localist movements...

J: Local work is one thing, and a local perspective is something else. In whatever you have said, it seems to me, there's no national class perspective.

C: National perspective? To create a workers' movement at a national level you have to unite workers and build an organisation at that level. This I said from the start.

K: But who will do that? And how?

C: The method behind this I explained from the start. Workers from different factories create organisations there, in these there are militant workers, they have to be educated politically.

A: Who will educate them?

C: Whoever the conscious workers are, they will educate.

G: The question is, what is this political education? Will you make them read Marxist literature or what?

C: See, if you're talking about political education, then we shall have to both give them Marxist literature and, whatever struggle there is, you'll have to analyse this and explain it to them. You'll have to do both things side by side.

G: But then the question is, to analyse a struggle, it is not enough to analyse the situation of the area in which the struggle breaks out. You can't analyse a struggle simply on the level of the area itself. You can't analyse the factory or its capitalist on an area level. Only by looking at the movement within national capitalism as a whole can you analyse capitalist development in an area. Capitalist development and the workers' movement on a national scale - these are the only basis for analysing struggles in any given area.

C: No. Each situation is defined by special characteristics. In this or that area the formation of struggle will be different or the same. How can you say what happens on a national scale should also happen here? Does this make any sense? From time to time we have to look at the given situation and take whatever stand is necessary.

G: Agreed. There is particularity in the struggles of different places. Still, when these struggles break out simultaneously, then there is some thread connecting them. In form the struggles may be local, but in content they are national, class struggles.

K: C, you said, and that is my opinion too, that the militants who are active in the movement, only they will build the workers organisations, increase their consciousness and form a programme for them. But the militants of one area can't sit down and build such a programme, you too agree with that. So for this reason we shall have to give some national-level perspective. So, for this, earlier I made the following proposal, that we can unite workers in different places, different industrial belts, different states, different cities, we can organise them, we can raise questions before them, we can tell them you reflect, you start thinking, discuss it and give it shape. Suppose we took four meetings in the four zones of India, along these lines, of trade union activists and of politically conscious, thinking workers, then from that we can draw out

some programme, we can give that programme a shape on the basis of some central organisation.

C: Surely first you have to build it at a district level, a state level, before you can build it at a national level? Now in Maharashtra there are so many districts where you can work, where you can unite workers. Don't you have to take this into account? About the programme I'd like to say - whatever the programme you propose today, who's going to agree or disagree with it? If you argue with a programme 'I don't agree, I won't come with you, you can do what you like - listen. There must be a fundamental line. If you say 'programme', then you're talking about something quite big. There must be a fundamental line, some guidance, this is the line we shall have to develop according to, and this can be formulated in such a way that we can have a debate on different views, and after a political debate, whichever line is correct, we'll adopt that line. If you do things in this way, then something is possible. If you just propose a programme and say, follow this, no one is going to.

J: As against this, an alternative perspective might be that while this local work starts and continues, simultaneously with that, on a national basis, there must be a workers' congress. Workers must come together precisely to discuss what direction to give the movement. There are only two leaderships of the working class today: the trade unions on a centralised, national basis, a disunited leadership fighting with itself, and there are the militants, the real class leadership. Only two leaderships of the class are left, abstract leadership of the class, concrete leadership of the class. Now this concrete leadership of the class is completely disunited locally - some in Pune, some in Thane, some in Bombay, some in Nagpur, some in Delhi, some in Bengal, like that. ~~Completely~~ They are not a fist, they are not together, and therefore they cannot challenge the trade unions. And therefore they tail behind the trade unions. In the sense that until the unions give the call to fight the Industrial Relations Bill, the militants can do nothing. Of course, they can start a local agitation, but on a national scale they can do nothing. Because on a national scale they are not a force. So what I'm saying is that simultaneously with local work, every militant should think of other militants, in other parts of the country, in order to create something like a programme for the working class, a direction for its struggles. Even before mass movements have been consciously prepared on a local basis.

R: I think there's a confusion between mass organisations of the working class and organisations of advanced workers. Because, see, to say that before a centralised mass organisation, say a Congress of Soviets or something like that, that before a workers' government can be built it is necessary to have local mass organisations would be correct. But before a national militants' organisation can be built, it's not necessary for us to have mass organisations in all localities. So there's a difference between these two. All you need is local groups of militants before you can bring them together on a national scale.

J: Otherwise the local work doesn't have a national direction, except in the mind. The militant says, I am working for the Revolution. Since the Revolution is national, in fact, since it is international, I am working for something international. But that is something in the militant's mind. The shape which he gives to his work in this area or that area, that is not a national shape. Whereas today it is imperative that the trade union leaderships be challenged on a national scale from within the working-class. That is the most important task. Otherwise everything is in their hands.

C: Look, this is true, until there is an organisation, who can give a direction? So the main thing is first to build an organisation.

G: But how?

C: All our tasks on the national level have their basis only in the emergence of such an organisation. First we must arrive at some political agreement, and on that basis create an organisation which can give a call to the movement. Otherwise nothing can happen.

The above is a translated and slightly abbreviated version of a recorded discussion in Hindi. (BCP.)

BOOKS YOU SHOULD READ AND DISCUSS

ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL

*intellectual and manual
labour*

(Macmillan 1978)

ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL

*economy and class structure
of german fascism*

(CSE Books, London, 1978)

ROMAN ROSDOLSKY

the making of marx's CAPITAL

(Pluto Press, London, 1978)

CSE MOTORS GROUP

*workers' enquiry into
the motor industry*

(CSE Books, London, Jan.1979)

E.B. PASCHUKANIS

*marxism and the general
theory of law*

(London 1978)

For CSE Publications, contact CSE Books,
55 Mount Pleasant,
London WC 1X 0AE
England

For Pluto Press Publications, contact Pluto Press,
Unit 10 Spencer Court,
7 Chalcot Rd,
London NW 1 8JH
England

1) DEMOCRACY AND TRADE UNION RECOGNITION

The Triumph of Trade unionism

The triumph of democracy brought with it the recognition of the trade unions, gave them a new status, and acknowledged without reservation their threefold function as social, market and political organizations. This development found its clearest expression in Germany, England, and Austria.

The German trade union movement has a short but stormy past. At the end of 1877 there were 30 socialist, or "free" trade unions. Of these 25 were central organizations with a membership of about 50,000. The democratic trade unions had roughly 42,000 members. Bismarck's anti-socialist law of October 19, 1878, suppressed the socialist trade unions. Although, after the revocation of the law they revived rapidly and vigorously. In 1890 the socialist trade unions joined forces under the leadership of Carl Legien. The great upward swing of the movement dates from this time. The democratic trade unions on the other hand stagnated, and only their salaried workers' section attained significance.

In 1891 were founded the Catholic or Christian trade unions which gained a foothold mainly in Catholic Rhineland and Westphalia. They too had their centre of gravity in the salaried workers' unions. There were also some insignificant local unions and national laborers' unions, which never had any important influence.

The number and membership of the chief unions of manual workers was :

Year	Free Trade Unions		Christian Unions		Democratic Unions	
	Number	Members	Number	Members	Number	Members
		,000		,000		,000
1891	62	278	--	----	18	62
1900	58	680	--	----	20	91
1903	--	--	--	91	--	--
1914	49	2,075	25	343	23	77
1922 ^a	49	7,800	19	1,049	21	230
1924 ^b	41	4,600	18	612	20	349
1930	31	4,800	18	658	22	163
1931	30	4,412	18	578	23	181

^a :- (1922) Inflation.

^b :- (1924) Stabilization.

Among the free or socialist unions the strongest were the metal workers with nearly 1,000,000 members; the state and municipal employees and transport workers (except railwaymen), about 700,000; Building workers, about 500,000; and factory workers, (unskilled only, especially chemical workers) about 450,000. All the big unions were industrial unions. The trend toward concentration into fewer unions was clear.

We find a different state of affairs among the salaried or professional workers' unions. Here the influence of the Democratic group and of the "National Germans" was preponderant, especially after 1930. For the members of the socialist salaried-workers' unions were to a very large extent employed in co-operative stores, social insurance organizations, and municipalities, where a strong socialist and trade unionist influence prevailed; and when, after 1930, this influence weakened, the stimulus to join the socialist salaried workers' unions also waned.

The "Deutschnationale Handlungsgehilfen Verband" (Union of National German Commercial Clerks) which became one of the most important groups of the National Socialists (Nazis), grew steadily from 160,000 in 1914 to 409,000 in 1931. This orga-

nization took in men only. The corresponding women's organization had 92,000 members in 1931.

The democratic union of salaried employees in 1931 had 327,000 members (men and women).

On the other hand, the socialist salaried employees' union in 1931 had only 203,000 members (men and women). 125,000 foreman and 62,000 technicians were organized in socialist unions. But these two groups were in the socialist unions only through force of habit. They were the first to drop out. Thus, strong as were the roots which the socialist trade unions struck in the manual workers movement, these unions were lamentably weak in the salaried workers' movement. What the causes of this were, and to what consequences it led, will be seen presently.

The German constitution of August 11, 1919, vested the trade unions with the strength of special recognition, in Articles 159 and 165. In the first place, the constitution acknowledged their existence vis-a-vis the state. The cabinet, no more than the legislature or the police force, was to have the right to dissolve the trade unions. Secondly, the constitution announced that the trade unions were free bodies beyond the control and independent of the cabinet. Lastly, the trade unions were called on to fulfill certain positive tasks.

The entire social system of Germany, from 1919-1932, was based on the idea of Parity. There was to be a parity between employers and workmen; a parity between Catholicism and Protestantism, a parity between the different states of Germany. It was to be a system of equilibrium; the state was pictured as a neutral power, hovering above the several equal groups, and it was the duty of the state to intervene only if and when these antagonistic forces could not settle their differences by their own devices.

If now we link this up with our discussion of the five points at which the might of property finds expression, we find that the WEIMER republic endeavored to bring the trade unions' influence to bear on all those five points.

(1) To begin with, the worker was protected against, abusive exploitation of his labour power. Innumerable laws for the protection of labor secured him from such exploitation. The control was vested in the factory inspectors. These inspectors were increasingly selected from the ranks of the trade unionists. The responsibility for the execution of the laws relating to the length of the working day lay mainly with the trade unions, which in these questions very often sought the assistance of the works councils. The Law of February 11, 1920, relating to works councils, restricted the employers power of control and created certain rights of co-operation. If we draw a comparison between the shop or factory and the state we can say that the works-councils law introduced the fundamental basis of constitutional monarchy into the labor code. Just as the state has three powers, legislative, executive, and judicial, so also is the business and industrial undertaking equipped with these same powers. Prior to the introduction of the law, all three powers were vested exclusively in the employer. He was the sole legislator, for he issued the factory rules. The administration was centred in him, for he engaged and dismissed the workers. He was the sole judge, for he inflicted the punishments which were provided in the factory rules. The works council acts vested the legislative power jointly in the hands of the employer and the works council, which was elected independently of any influence or pressure on the part of either the state or the employer. If no agreement could be reached between them, the board of arbitration (later the labor court) issued the factory rules.

In administration also, the works councils had a voice, even though only a limited one. When a worker was dismissed he could protest to the works council. If the council supported the protest and the employer still declined to employ the man further, the worker could sue for reinstatement or damages in the labor court. The councils further had the duty of supervising the maintenance of the collective agreements, the observance of the factory rules, and the protection of the workers.

The factory rules could be applied only with the concurrence of the two parties. If they could not agree, the decision rested with the labor court - the new judiciary. In everything the works councils were what the Germans called the "elongated arms" of trade unions in factory. Formally, indeed, they were independent of the

trade unions, but they constantly had recourse to the trade union organizations for assistance in the fulfilment of their duties, the members of the council were trained and educated in the trade union schools and supported by the trade unions in every conflict they had with the employers.

(2) The attempt to make the influence of the working-class movement prevail in the sphere of the enterprise did not succeed to any considerable extent, since very soon after the enactment of the works-council law, the reaction in Germany found its feet again. The works councils had the right to send two delegates to the directors' meetings of corporations which employed them, and to examine their balance sheets and profit- and - loss accounts. But it cannot be said that these provisions were of much importance.

(3) The influence of the trade unions in the commodity market was equally weak except in the coal and potash industries, in which special laws (erroneously called socialization acts) provided for a semi-state-management. To these public boards of directors the coal and potash trade unions could delegate representatives; they were thus to a certain extent participants in the management of the coal and potash industries.

(4) Their decisive influence, however, found expression in the labor market. By a decree of December 23, 1918, issued by the Council of peoples' Deputies, the collective agreements were legally recognized as the legal means for the control of wages and conditions of employment, the provisions of these agreements became a part of the employment contract between employer and workmen. The employer was not allowed to make special arrangements which would place the worker in a less favorable position. But only organized employers and workers were affected by the agreements, and there was danger that unorganized workers would be displaced by the organized or that employers would take on only non-union men. Therefore the same law provided that, should it prove necessary, the minister of labor might by decree extend the agreement to the whole industry or trade. Of this power the minister of labor made constant use until 1931.

If no voluntary agreement as to wage rates, etc., could be arrived at, the state, which was looked on as neutral, intervened. By a decree of 1923, arbitration boards were created. The chairman of an equal number of employers and trade union representatives. This arbitration board announced decisions which the two parties could then accept or reject. If they were rejected by one or both parties, an official of the REICH had the power to promulgate a binding award, which constituted an imposed wage-agreement between the employers' association and the trade union.

But a regulation of wage rates and conditions of employment can be effective only if it is accompanied by unemployment-insurance benefits high enough to prevent an undue fall in wages.

Apart from a few unimportant attempts, the Unemployment-insurance system is entirely the work of the Weimar constitution and the trade unions. After numerous experiments, unemployment insurance was created and employment exchanges were regulated by a law of 1927. The whole system was put under the Reich Board for Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance. It was organized into one central, thirteen regional, and 361 local boards. Each of these various boards consisted of an equal number of representatives of employers, workers and public bodies (states, municipalities, etc.) under the chairmanship of a neutral official. The whole system was under the supervision of the minister of labor of the Reich.

In this law we find a further expression of the collectivist democracy where the state called in autonomous private societies to help it execute its business efficiently.

Unemployment insurance covered 17-18 million people. The unemployed person received relief after a certain waiting period. The size of the benefit depended on the average wage he had been earning. After the depression had set in, emergency acts were imposed and unemployment relief ranged from RM 6.40 to RM 37.80 per week. (1 dollar one bought 4 Reichsmarks at the time). The funds were raised by equal contributions from the workers and the employers and supplemented by loans from the Reich.

Committees were appointed for the settlement of disputes over the claim to and the extent of the benefit, and these committees again were made up according to the parity principle.

Insurance and the finding of new employment were co-ordinated. The guiding aim of the establishment always had to be the return

of the unemployed into the production process. To this end the state introduced and maintained educational centers-- but not enough of them. There were also the relief works, which were embarked on mainly by public bodies. They were drainage schemes, road building, building of workers' houses, etc.

After many struggles and legal disputes the trade unions eventually succeeded in establishing the principle that relief workers should be paid the usual trade-union scale of wages, so that at no downward pressure on the wages of the employed workers could take place.

~~After~~ This system was supplemented by an extensive system of further social insurance against accident, old age, illness, for manual and professional workers both.

(5) The fifth and last sphere in which the rule of property comes to the fore, the state, was like wise a wide field for trade union activity. This activity, moreover, was carried on in all the three regions of the state's functions-- legislative, administrative, and judicial.

The German constitution had introduced political democracy and proposal to create a second chamber constituted on a professional and occupational basis had been rejected. The trade unions could not, therefore participate directly in the legislative process.

But all the trade unions in Germany-- the socialist (free) unions, as the strongest, the Christian, and the Democratic unions--had their political ties, that is to say, each of these organizations was attached to a political party. Thus the free trade unions were attached to the Center party; their salaried or professional workers' organizations were, to a considerable extent, connected with the German Nationalist and subsequently with the National Socialist party. And the Democratic Tradeunions were linked to the Democratic party.

Thus, indirectly, political influence was extremely strong. The Social Democratic party was financially dependent mainly on the free trade unions, and the more frequently elections were held, the greater did this dependence become. The consequence was that a large number of trade union secretaries found their way into parliament. There--as was only natural--they stood for the trade unionist policy, namely a policy of the government of the day. In 1930, for instance, the cabinet of the Reich, headed by the Social Democratic leader Hermann Mueller, was defeated by the trade unions. Because it (or rather the Liberal ministers in it) wanted to lower the scales of unemployment benefit.

Earlier, in 1920, the trade unions had defeated Kapp, the reactionary leader of a counter-revolutionary revolt, by declaring a very effective general strike against his "Putsch".

No important political decision was taken without the trade unions. And it was very often they who turned the scale; their influence was invariably stronger than that of the Social Democratic party.

In the judicial sphere the trade unions played an active part in the administration of industrial justice. The act of 1927, relating to labor law courts, created special Labor Courts for the settlement of disputes between (1) employer and employee, (2) employer and work council, and (3) the parties to collective bargaining. These courts dispensed justice cheaply and expeditiously. Throughout this sphere, the influence of the trade unions was extraordinarily strong. The judges in all the three courts consisted, besides the state judge, of an equal number of representatives from the employers' associations and the trade unions. In the first court only trade union officials could represent the worker. In the second court the worker had the right to choose as his counsel either a trade-union official or a lawyer. In the third court only lawyers could plead.

Thus in this region also, the trade unions, as the recognized representatives of the workers, were able to advise in state affairs. That the same applied to social-insurance administration, has already been shown.

True, this vast system of collectivist democracy was never carried through completely. That it should be was indeed promised in the constitution. But the continued growth of the political power of the reaction frustrated the realization of the promise. And therefore there existed as the foundations of a democratic industrial

~~Industrial structure, which was to have been built step~~
 industrial structure only the works council, the trade unions, and the Economic Council for the Reich. There was missing whole middle part of the structure, which was to have been built stepwise from the works councils up to the Economic Council for the Reich. Even the Economic Council, created May, 30, 1920, Remained only a provisional one. The Last attempt to transform the provisional into a permanent Reich Economic Council (July, 1930) failed because nobody was very much enamored of the proposal.

The provisional Economic Council for the Reich had 326 members. It was divided into ten groups; in the majority of these groups the three trade union movements, according to their respective strength, were represented by delegates equal in number to those of the employers. The significance of the Economic Council was twofold: the cabinet could ask its advice on matters of social, economic and financial policy, and at the same time it served as an organ of investigation or inquiry. But even in the execution of these two functions the Council was obstructed from the very moment that the political crisis supervened in Germany, namely after 1930.

The Standard of life of the workers rose as follows: in 1928 the wage increases amounted to 6.8%; in 1929 to 3.8%; in 1930, despite the crisis, wages and conditions of employment remained unchanged, thanks to the influence of the trade unions and the functioning of democracy.

In 1931, 1932, however, when Parliament was put out of action, under the Brüning and von Papen governments, the standard of life was appreciably lowered.

The Weimar democracy, a democracy of the Social Democratic party and the free trade unions, had thus achieved two things: it had won for the working man a comparatively speaking high cultural level, and it had begun to give the worker a new political and social status.

Austria showed a similar development. Already in 1900, one-fifth of all the Austrian workers were organized in the free trade unions. Later their membership figures for manual and professional workers together were:

1919295,000
1924828,000
1929737,000
1930555,000

As for the Catholic trade unions, it is astounding that, in a purely Catholic country, they could muster only 111,000 members in 1930. In the same year the membership of the racial (anti-semitic) Trade unions was only 45,000.

The trend of the relation between state and trade union in Austria was similar to that in Germany. The Works Councils Act of 1919 decreed the legal recognition of the trade union representatives in the factories. The duties of these works councils were similar to those of the German councils, namely, inspection and thus supervision of the execution of the collective bargaining agreements, and conclusion of supplementary agreements with the employer. In this way the works councils were embraced by the trade unions.

In the Labor Market, also, the trade union's right to take part was, as in Germany, assured. The law of 1919 recognized the collective bargaining agreement as the method of regulating wages and conditions of employment, and stipulated that this was to apply to all members of a factory or other industrial undertaking. The ~~Anti~~ Anti Terror law of April 5, 1930, was the first, and unsuccessful, attempt to deal a blow to the collective bargaining agreement and the trade unions.

The method by which Austria gave the workers' movement official representation differed from that adopted in Germany. A law of 1920 created Public ~~Chambers~~ Chambers in which the workers and the salaried or professional employees were jointly represented. These chambers ranked beside the Chambers of Industry and Commerce the representative organizations of industry and commerce respectively, and their members were elected by the workers and professional employees. 78.8% of the electors voted for the nominees of the socialist trade unions, 10.4% for those of the Christian, 7.86% for those of the racial and 2.79% for those of the communist trade unions. These ~~have-been-taken-into-account~~ ~~of-which~~

These Chambers have to take a stand on all question of commerce, trade, and industry which either indirectly or directly affect the workers or professional employees.

In other respects (arbitration but not compulsory labor courts, unemployment relief, etc.), Austrian legislation was very largely the same as that of Germany.

In the French trade unions, two different movements intersected one another, viz: the occupational movement which aims at the creation of national unions on a professional and occupational basis; and the non-occupational, local combination into "trade councils" (*bourse de travail*).

Only when after 1892 the local trade councils had combined into a national union, was it possible for the movements to reach agreement at the Congress of 1902 and for the "Confederation Generale Du Travail" to be formed. This union is politically neutral; it believes in direct action. But "direct action", says Jouhaux "does not mean rebellion, barricades, disorder and plunder, as our opponents would have you believe!" It means that "the workers are determined to settle their own affairs by their own strength and their own resources." The C.G.T. recognizes the class struggle in its economic form and refuses to acknowledge the state's role as mediator in industrial disputes. It sees the weapon of the workers in the economic general strike. But the War reduced this syndicalist theory to absurdity. The French trade unionists have in practice trodden the same path as their European comrades, namely the path of social reform, with state intervention in all spheres.

By a law of March 12, 1920 the trade unions were legally recognized and declared to be the representatives of the working class. A works council law, such as that of Germany or Austria, does not exist in France. On the other hand, a law of March 25, 1919, vested in the trade union the right to participate in the regulation and supervision of the labor market. The trade union concludes the collective wage-agreement and it is entitled to sue in its own name for the fulfilment of the contract.

By a decree of January 17, 1925, a National Economic Council was created. It is under the control of the prime minister and includes representatives of the employers, workers, consumers, and the liberal professions. The Council also has the function of preparing social and economic legislation.

Numerous other laws make the trade unions an organ in the enforcement of legislation.

Of the position in England, the country with the unwritten constitution, it is extremely difficult to give a systematic account. Legal pronouncements, on works councils and collective bargaining agreements for instance, do not exist. But in England, also, the tendency to assign marketing and political functions to the trade unions has gone very far. "The trade union officials are to a large extent entrusted with quasi judicial and administrative functions." Mention may be made of the National Wages Board for Railways; the Railway Rates Tribunal; the Central Electricity Board Company; the British Broadcasting Company; The Economic Advisory Council created by the prime minister; the courts of referees and the courts of appeal in disputed cases of unemployment benefits; the 43 trade boards which fix minimum wages; the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa in 1932; The World Monetary and Economic Conference in 1933; The Consultative Commission of the Ministries of Education and Health. In General, trade unions are consulted on all national industrial questions.

The Breakdown Of Trade Unionism And The

Supremacy Of The State

The phenomena characterize the period of trade union recognition: (1) in the economic sphere, the transformation of the capitalist competitive economy into a Monopolistic Economy; (2) in the Political

After the elections of the Spring of 1936, while Blum, the socialist leader, was premier-designate, there was a wave of strikes, some of which were settled by collective agreement, others however, by Blum's promise to introduce laws for better wages and hours and the right of collective bargaining --Editor.

sphere, the transformation of the capitalist competitive economy into a Mass-Democracy. Both tendencies change the whole structure of society and the state.

Concentration of capital assumes different forms. Taking Germany as an example, we see that property creates for itself different organizational forms, depending on the point at which it is exercising its authority and privilege. For the control of the Commodity Market, capital organizes a trade association, gentlemen's agreement, holding company, etc.

For the control of the Labor market, capital organizes the employers' association, and in order to bring pressure to bear on the State, German capital is organized principally in the "Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie" (Reich union of German Industry)

No country in the world, with the possible exception of the United States of America, has experienced the tendency towards the concentration of capital to such an extent as Germany. In 1930 about 50 percent of German industry was organized in cartels. This tendency is very largely explained by a series of historical circumstances, which are admirably set out in Thorstein Bunde Veblen's book "Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution". Two important influences were the fact that Germany entered the world market very late, and the fact of the inflation, which brought about a tremendous concentration of capital. This mammoth system, which cannot be described here, lived mainly from its monopoly revenue, that is to say from the utilization of its powerful economic position. When, in the economic crisis, the cartel system threatened to collapse, it called the state to its assistance. The state helped it by subsidies on a grandiose scale, by buying from the cartels, by raising tariffs, and by other means.

In general, it is to be noticed that the influence of the state grows uninterruptedly. The state itself assumes extensive economic activities. It acquires an interest in a large number of banks; it works mines; it manages railways; it owns and controls the postal services; it takes up shares in many industrial undertakings, not infrequently paying very high prices for them in order to save big capitalists from bankruptcy.

In the sphere of social policy, the state - whose direct representatives preside in all the "parity" organizations - acquires a more decisive influence, since increasingly it comes to be the case that the two antagonistic sides of the "parity" arrangement cannot reach agreement.

Mass-democracy has strengthened the political consciousness of the working class. The experience of the War has made the Working class throughout the World conscious of itself, and has finally detached the working class movement from the tail end of the bourgeois political parties. These two facts, the appearance of a self-conscious working class movement in the political field, and the entire picture of the state, of society and of the economy and have to a far-reaching extent brought society under the management of the state.

WHAT Effect has this development had on the function of the TUs
INCREASED Productivity occasioned by the introduction of scientific methods of production leads to a diminution of scientific methods of production leads to diminution in the numbers of workers employed, thus unquestionably creating technological unemployment.

:- Two examples from the German coal industry are instructive in this context: In 1925, 343 pits employed 575,000 workers with an output of 238 tons per worker per year. In 1929, 266 pits employed only 517,000 workers, and the output was 315 tons. The Ilse mine (lignite) in 1925 had an output of 8600,000 tons and employed 6,942 workers. In 1929, with an output of 12,280,000 tons it employed only 5,694 Wrks.
:- I do not discuss the merits of any particular theory such as whether the unemployment is necessarily permanent or whether it is merely temporary. The fact remains that technological unemployment and the depression came together. (Prof. Paul H. Douglas has argued that technological unemployment is negligible. See especially "Problem of Unemployment" by Douglas and Director, Ed.)

A further consequence of rationalization and standardization is that the Composition of the Working Force Changes. The growing tendency for the economic system to organized in cartels, giant concerns, and trusts creates a new bureaucracy. The number of office workers, clerks and officials increased. The introduction of scientific methods and standardization reduces the number of skilled workers, while at the same time it increases the number of technical superintendents and unskilled and semi-skilled workers, especially also the number of women.

As markets contract and competition intensifies, the distributive apparatus grows. This increases the number of those engaged in the distributive process, namely clerks and white-collar workers, and Women.

There can be no doubt that social legislation and the policy pursued by the trade unions have facilitated and even consciously promoted this tendency towards the concentration of capital, rationalization and standardization. High wages, better hours and employment conditions, a highly developed and widely applied system of labour protection, etc. constitute a heavier financial burden on medium and small-sized undertakings than on large-scale ones in which the ratio of fixed to circulating capital is high, i.e. undertakings which employ relatively little labor and much machinery.

It is undeniable that the enterprise must endeavor to escape every enforced rise in wages and every increased expenditure imposed on it by the demands of social legislation. This "saving" usually takes the form of introducing labor-saving machinery, which displaces Workmen.

Moreover, the German trade unions deliberately furthered this rationalization process. They did so because of their optimistic belief that the displacement of workers in these undertakings would lead to increased employment in those branches of industry which produced the machines and that the rise in purchasing power would increase production to such an extent that the industries producing mass-products would eventually reabsorb the unemployed.

But the consequences of monopolistic organizations, aggectiong both employers and employed, must not be overlooked. Trade unions give rise to employers' associations. These invariably arise only as opponents to the trade unions. While hitherto the trade union has been faced with one individual employer, it is now confronted with an organization of employers. On the other hand, the combination of employers in to associations gives rise, in its turn, to centralization within the trade unions. Yet employers' association do not in themselves constitute a menace to the trade unions. They begin to become dangerous only when the trade unions are confronted with monopolies. In this case the strength of the trade unions is often inadequate to deal with powerful monopolies. The trade unions then require the help of the state.

But the growth in the economic activity of the state also brings the trade unions into direct conflicts with the state. The more the state protects economic activities to itself. The more frequently will the state itself, in fixing wages and conditions of employment, become the antagonist of the trade unions. What are the consequences of this development for the trade unions? There can be no doubt that it weakens the appeal of the trade union to the interests of the worker in the condition of his job. Furthermore unemployment, especially chronic unemployment estranges the unemployed workman from his union.

Chronic unemployment and the altered composition of the workers' movement are two vital causes of the weakening of the trade unions.

(a) That this is true of chronic unemployment cannot be disputed. Those out of work among the total membership of the free trade unions were:

in 1929.....	13 per cent
in 1931.....	35 per cent
in 1932 (February & March).....	45 per cent

At the end of 1932, for instance, about 90 percent of all the members of the builders' and the carpenters' unions were unemployed.

The unemployment statistics for the entire German working class tell an impressive story. In January, 1929, there were 2,850,000 out of work.

22 :- In the United Steel Works the number of manual workers was reduced between 1919-29 from 183,000 to 134,700, and the number of salaried employees rose during the same time from 15,700 to 16,400. Between 1907 and 1925 the number of salaried workers rose 67 percent whereas the number of manual workers increased only 27 percent; the number of women employed rose 34 percent and the number of all wage earners (salaried and manual workers) increased by only 24 percent.

00 :- The lockout of metalworkers in 1928 was partly won by unions, but only because the Prussian state paid poor-relief.

of work; by December, 1932, the figure had mounted to 5,921,000. And to these figures must be added the "invisible" unemployment, which totalled about 2,000,000.

With this situation, unemployment insurance could not possibly cope. When the unemployment insurance act was promulgated, one had reckoned that the maximum number of people for whom provision would have to be made at any one moment would not exceed 8,00,000. In the end, seven or eight times that number had somehow or other to be provided for. Of these only 638,000 unemployed received benefits from the unemployment insurance fund in October 1932. Only 1,130,000 people were given "crisis pay". The remainder were thrown back upon the charity of the municipalities, which themselves were on the verge of bankruptcy.

The trade unions, for their part, had continuously to reduce their own scales of benefit. The falling off in membership and the unemployment of their members had drained their treasuries.

(b) The changed composition of the working force likewise contributed to the weakening of the trade unions. Unskilled workers, inspectors, administrative officials, shop assistants and women are extremely difficult to organize. The growing significance of the professions and salaried positions heightened the significance of their trade unions. But the majority of these were bourgeois; for the salaried or professional employee did not want to become a proletarian. He did not want to "reduced to the level of the masses"; he wanted to retain his middle-class status and he strove not only to preserve, but to extend, his privileges.

And in this he succeeded. In social insurance and social legislation, salaried employee and manual worker were treated differently. The insurance benefits of the salaried employees were higher than those of the manual workers. The period of notice to which a salaried employee was entitled before being discharged was longer than that of the manual worker. Indeed, in 1927, a law was passed almost unanimously by the Reichstag, giving older professional employees the right to an exceptionally long period of notice. No party dared to oppose the demands of these employees, nor those of the minor officials. They had their henchment in every political faction. But capital said to itself: Divide the rule; grant privileges to a small group at the expense of a large one, and you win their support.

This is what happened. This NEW MIDDLE-CLASS became the stronghold of the National Socialists.

(c) But the trade unions' appeal to the workers' vocational interests is unquestionably weakened also by the increased activity of the state in the regulation of wages and conditions of employment.

The arbitration system, the legal extension of the collective wage agreements to unorganized workers, unemployment insurance and the whole system of social insurance--these made it appear to the worker that he no longer had any need for the trade unions. "If the state takes charge of all these things, what use are trade unions? This was the stock question in Germany.

Owing to the constantly increasing state control of social life and the appearance of the state as an economic opponent, the number of strikes diminished. Similarly, in the economic crisis, unions found it more and more difficult to reach voluntary agreements with the employers. The number of forced interventions by the state in the industrial relations between employers and workers grew. For in a monopolistic economy every strike affects more or less the entire economic system and thereby also the state. The risk involved in a workers' struggle became greater; the success less certain. Only big strikes, sympathetic strikes, now held out to the unions any prospects of success. In the case of Germany moreover, one must not forget that during the crisis very big strikes could easily lead to civil war. Thus the outlay incurred by the German trade unions for strike purposes fell continuously, and Austria had the same experience, as the adjacent table shows. In fact, throughout 1931 the German trade unions did not declare a single offensive strike.

A further important reason for this lies in the fact that the collectivist democracy binds the trade unions and the state closer together. True, the trade unions are independent and free; but this close contact leads the trade unions to develop a psychological attitude of dependence on the state.

Decline Of The Strikes In Germany And Austria

Decline of the strike in Germany and Austria

Year	Percent of German union's expenditure paid for strikes	Strikes	Workers involv- ed
1904-13, yearly average	--	713	98,000
1906	36.2	--	--
1910	32.9	--	--
1920	--	329	179,000
1921	26.3	--	--
1924	21.3	401	268,000
1925, after German inflation	20.6	287	46,000
1926	2.6	186	18,000
1927	6.9	195	28,000
1928 (a)	15.3 (a)	272	32,000
1929	4.9	202	23,000
1930	3.0	80	5,000
1931	4.9	--	--

(a) In 1928 there was a lock-out of the metal workers in the Rhineland and Westphalia, cf. the last footnote, above.

We can summarize the process of transformation referred to in this chapter as follows:

1. The existence of trade unions gives rise to employers' associations
2. The trade unions' Policy aiming at the improvement of the standard and conditions of life of the working class facilitates the process of rationalization and also the concentration of capital.
3. Rationalization and monopolization create technological unemployment and change the composition of the working force.
4. The state tends increasingly to assume the role and functions of employer of labor.
5. The purely economic power of the trade unions consequently wanes.
6. The significance of the free collective bargaining agreement and of the economic strike diminishes.
7. The power of the state grows uninterruptedly.

These developments are tolerable from the trade unions' point of view if and so long as political democracy functions; if and so long as the workingclass movement is able politically, in parliament through a parliamentary majority, or at least through parliamentary opposition, to influence and bring pressure to bear on the state. "Parity" and "neutrality" are fictions. The state must and does take a definite stand. It must and does make up its mind. It will effect a compromise between the interests of employer and worker only if it is forced to do so by political pressure, that is, if it is prevented by public opinion and parliamentary criticism from supporting the interests of employers in a partisan manner. But the moment that the rights of political freedom are trampled on and destroyed, the moment that democracy is undermined, and the state becomes a naked class dictatorship, then the working class movement is completely subjugated to that dictatorship.

This pluralistic system, in which interest-groups pull and haul the state away from each other, cannot possibly be permanent. For it is essentially static in character, whereas society, economic conditions, and politics are in a state of constant change, are, that is to say, dynamic in nature, and therefore threaten to overthrow this artificially balanced system. In a depression or economic crisis such a system must necessarily collapse. For in the crisis the trade unions are an obstacle to the fall in the standard of life of the workers, especially of the Rates of Wages. The rigidity of the trade union system proves to be a handicap to the necessities of capitalism. Property therefore uses its power in the state to maintain its supremacy through state intervention. The Brüning and Von Papen cabinets, which preceded the Hitler dictatorship, effected through no less than five emergency decrees of the president of the Reich, an appreciable lowering of the standard of life, not only in wages but in the consequent embitterment and destruction of political amenities.

But while the rights of political liberty still exist, so long as there is a free press, so long as freedom of meeting and assembly is preserved, so long as democracy is articulate-- the state must recognize mass-democracy and cannot venture to defend the interests of property exclusively against the interests of labor. It must make certain concessions to labor. It cannot utterly shatter the constitutional position of the workers. It follows therefore that, when driven to extremity by economic exigencies, monopoly capital must destroy democracy and the last

vestiges of political liberty by using the entire forces of the state. This, in fact, is the history of the German democracy.

After 1930, the German democracy was undermined, the sovereignty of parliament systematically destroyed, and the rights of political and social liberty withdrawn. The democratic state was systematically confronted with an anti-democratic state.

For the trade unions, there was, after 1930, only one possibility, only one road to salvation: to become one hundred percent political unions and concentrate their entire energy on fighting for the preservation of democracy and the rights of political liberty. Only through the capture of the state machine was there any hope of preserving their independence as well as of guaranteeing the security of the rights of workers. This, to be sure, ~~the issue of which was uncertain~~ would have meant a general strike, followed by civil war, the issue of which was uncertain.

But so far from treading this path, the German trade unions after 1932, took the very opposite direction. They endeavored to hammer out a new ideology for themselves, a pure tradeunionist ideology. They even went so far as to represent the Hitler government's declaration that the First of May was to be a national holiday, as victory for the trade union idea. They severed their connection with the Social Democratic party in the hope of saving their organization.

Though they-- more even than the Social Democratic party--bore political responsibility, they tried hard to become "unpolitical" when they realized that, for those who fought for freedom and democracy, politics entailed the risk of destruction. They did not assume this risk; but they were destroyed nevertheless. The same development took place in Italy. The Italian trade union leaders, as d'Aragona, Rigola, and the rest, accepted the Treaty of Palazzo Vidoni (Oct. 22, 1925); they renounced their right to strike and begged only to be allowed to continue their activities in research and industrial assistance work. But this withdrawal, this attempt to become "unpolitical" in order to save the life of their organization, did not help them in the least. They too, suffered the fate which every totalitarian state decrees.....(First part complete)

(2nd Part)

PROPERTY AND TRADE UNIONISM

Property

Property is not merely control over material things. Property is a relation between men, through the medium of things. Property in the means of production confers also power over human beings. Herein lies the main function of property. By virtue of his control over material things, the property owner controls the individual as worker, consumer, and citizen. The worker is divorced from the means of production. the only property he disposes of is his labor power. But he can turn his labor to unefol account only by combining it with the means of production, which do not belong to him and ~~ab~~ about which he has no say. Property in the means of production, therefore, exerts a twofold effect on the worker:

Property attracts the worker into its sphere. This is the situation when society is divided into owners of the means of production and "free" workers-- who are free in the way in which an emancipated slave is free, legally free and also free of property. By drawing the worker into an endless chain of daily contracts for the sale of his labor power, property forces him to convert, if possible, his labor power into money. The worker cannot escape the magnetic pull of property if he wants to live and reproduce his labor power.

Property also implies power. From the moment the worker enters the factory gate, he surrenders part of his personal freedom, puts himself at the disposal of an authority outside himself, and comes under a foreign sway. The functions of attraction and constraint are therefore the two decisive effects which private property exerts on the worker.

Over and above this, the property owner dominates the worker as consumer; and he dominates the worker as citizen, that is, he dominates ~~state~~ the states.

Source of Owners' Power

The property owner exercises this dominion in five different spheres. His control over the worker becomes effective in the first instance in the Shop (factory, mine, railroad, store, office), the technical unit of the enterprise. Here the worker works. Here he experiences the authoritarian power of his employer.

The economic power of the employer is embodied in the Enterprise. it is here that decisions on economic questions are taken--how much to produce, what prices to ask, etc. The enterprise may of course be that of a single property owner, or a corporation benefitting a number of large and small owners, or a combination of several companies into a cartel, trust, or trade association.

The worker's wages and conditions of employment are determined in the Labor Market. This is the third place in which property in the means of production exercises its authoritative function. The worker's wages and conditions of employment are determined in the labor market by the owner of the means of production. The contract between employer and worker--in the absence of trade union action or favorable state intervention--is only formally a free contract. The form disguises the dictatorial power of the employer. A man who must work if he is to live cannot bargain freely.

The power of property over the consumer finds expression where the property owner is in a monopolistic position: that is, where he is able through economic power, to raise his prices and conditions of sale above the level at which they would be if free competition prevailed. Here in the Commodity Market, the monopoly dictates the prices and other supply conditions which the consumer must accept. This is done mostly by associations; but some large companies are also able to do it, and even the smaller company can rule the ultimate consumers' purchasing by means of an advertising campaign which penetrates the consumers' defenses.

The fifth and last sphere in which property's power of domination becomes patent is the State. In the state, property exercises decisive political functions, which vary according to the particular historico-political situation, and some of which will be detailed in this study.

The Problems To Be Solved

The power of property to draw men into labor contracts and to dictate their behavior when at work sets the working class and the state a series of problems. The central problem confronting every workers movement and every state is the problem of restricting and finally abolishing this power relation. But abolishing it must not, of course, be interpreted to mean the abrogation of every form of superior-subordinate relationship. Obviously, every community of work presupposes organization, and organization necessarily implies discipline. The problem in question is rather that of replacing the employer's dictatorial power by a democratic power which the workers shall either share or which they alone shall wield.

Taking the five points enumerated earlier, we may divide this problem into five problems which the working class movement and the state are called upon to solve.

First, there is the question of preventing the unscrupulous exploitation of the worker's labor power inside the Shop, through regulations for safeguarding the energy, health, life, and limb of the worker.

Over and above this there arises in the shop, where the employer's power of constraint becomes visible, the further question of the employees sharing in control and administration. Since many decisions on economic matters originate in the shop and all affect the shop, the workers movement and the state are confronted with the problem of obtaining for themselves a share in the management of the Enterprise, association, cartel or trust.

The labor market cannot be left to the dictatorship of property, which has never shown a sense of responsibility at all corresponding to its power. The labor movement and the state must therefore find ways and means of influencing the Labor Market: that is, they must bring about practices, rules, and regulations which give them a share in determining wage rates and conditions of employment.

Nor can the consumer be left to the monopolists' power. The problem that arises in the labor market also presents itself in the Commodity Market. Here an analogous problem suggests itself: Are the state and the social organizations to have powers over supply conditions and prices, which at present are fixed by the monopolists?

Ultimately the fight to smash the power of property will have to be waged in the field of the rule of private property, the State.

TRADE UNIONISM

The organizations which, among others, have set themselves the task of countering the power of property are the trade unions. The functions of the trade unions may be said to fall under three heads. First, they execute the functions of Friendly Societies or benefit societies. Since they do so, the unions are based on the principle of mutual help. They help their members in the most diverse ways. They grant them sickness and accident benefits, out-of-work pay, strike and lock out pay, and old-age allowances. They give legal aid to their members in the courts. Some of them provide a very wide variety of educational schemes. They contribute to the political and vocational training of their members and officials. For this purpose they must have their own press, their own places of meeting and assembly, and their own admini-

stratives staff. Finally, they have tribunals of their own, whose function it is to settle disputes between a member and his organization and between one organization and another. In all these directions the trade unions carry on pioneering work. Almost all the state systems of unemployment relief, labor exchanges, accident and sickness benefits, are modelled on the autonomous arrangements devised by the trade union. This group of functions of the trade unions (the inner trade union functions) has been carried furthest in England, and it had a marked effect on the character of German trade unionism.

Collective Bargaining

The second function of the trade unions is the Marketing Function or collective bargaining function. Through this function the unions aim at the control of the labor market. They meet the power of private property over the means of production with the power of the organized workers. Here their function is a twofold one. They either lay down the conditions of work and the wage rates, or, in so far as the state regulates these conditions, the unions' executive staffs undertake to see to it that these regulations are carried out. But of these two, the most important means of setting wage rates and conditions of work is the collective agreement. To create an agreement, unions use negotiation and investigation, and exercise influence and persuasion on the authorities of the shop and the enterprise. Back of this lies their final weapon, the strike and boycott.

Trade Union And Politics

Finally however, the trade unions are Political unions. Their aim is not only to control the labor market, not only to assist their members, but also, at the same time, to influence and bring pressure to bear on the state. This effort to influence and bring pressure extend to all three functions of the state, --the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. To this end the trade unions resort partly to direct methods, by participating in the administration of the state, by negotiating with the state officials, or by waging a political struggle in the form of strike. More often they use indirect methods to attain their objective--as do many other social pressure groups. Particularly they try to get their demands satisfied through the agency of political party and a parliamentary group.

It is impossible to say which of the three activities of the unions --that relating to benefits, to the market, or to the state--is of greatest importance. That all depends on the particular historical, political, and economic situation in which the unions find themselves. The attempt to influence the state is always present, and always basic, partly because the state affects the Benefit and market functions of these workers' organizations.

To sum up, the unions' aim is always a twofold one: (a) to raise the standard of life of their members and thereby also of the whole working class; (b) to realize the idea of freedom which inspires the workers' movement, that is, to free labor from the fetters of property and to replace the power of property by communal control. The unions strive not only to secure high wages and decent conditions of work for the worker but also to win for him a new social and political status.

WAGE-LABOUR: TRADE UNIONS AND THE STRUGGLE TO DETERMINE THE VALUE OF LABOUR-POWER

I

For over a century, trade unions have been the organisations by means of which the workers have fought for their interests. When we compare the condition of the working class at a time when trade unions were in their infancy with the condition of the working class where strong trade unions exist, it has to be acknowledged that they have been formidable weapons of struggle. And yet it has also become apparent that they suffer from limitations which at certain points have led workers to reject or go beyond them in a search for alternative forms of organisation. What are these limitations and why do they exist? Can they be overcome, or are they inherent in the structure and mode of functioning of trade unions? Given both their efficacy as organs of struggle and their limitations, it is important to determine their role very exactly. It is this role which is responsible both for their historical genesis and their ultimate disappearance, and which makes it necessary for the working class both to defend them and to supersede them. We begin, therefore, with an examination of the social relations of production within which trade unions first make their appearance.

A word of explanation as to why the example of England is taken. Firstly, because this is the example used by Marx in Capital, which remains the most profound and comprehensive theoretical examination of the capitalist system which has yet been made. Therefore the development of various theoretical points is made easier if the exposition in Capital is followed. But secondly, the example of England is used because it is the first country in which this struggle takes place. 'Since the contest takes place in the arena of modern industry, it is fought out first of all in the homeland of that industry - England. The English factory workers were the champions, not only of the English working class, but of the modern working class in general.' (Capital, Volume I, Pelican Edition, p. 412) In other words, the struggle did not follow the same stages in all countries where capitalism developed: legislation which was introduced in England was introduced subsequently in other countries even without the same protracted struggle of the working class within those countries, as in the case of India. The creation of a capitalist world economy thus resulted in the generalisation not only of capitalist relations of production, but also of the gains of the working class. As Marx puts it, the English factory workers were the champions not only of the English working class but of the modern working class in general; their gains were the gains of the working class of the whole world, and we therefore examine their history as an integral part of the history of the international working class movement.

II

The working day of the wage-labourer is divided in two portions. In the first, necessary labour is performed - labour whose equivalent in value is paid to the labourer as wages. The second portion is characterised by the performance of surplus labour, and the value created in this time is appropriated by the capitalist without equivalent. The labourer sells labour-power to the capitalist for the length of the whole working day, and receives in return value produced in the necessary labour-time. According to the laws of commodity production and exchange, what is sold must be equivalent in value to what is received in exchange. Hence the struggle over the value of labour-power is in practice a struggle over the length of the working day on one side, and the quantity of wages (the necessary labour-time) on the other. Less obviously, it is also a struggle over the intensity of work. For an increased intensity of work means an increased rate of consumption of labour-power, which must be compensated either by a reduction in the length of the working day, or by an increase in wages, if the price of labour-power is not to fall. A further complication is the fact that the value of labour-power is itself a variable quantity. Thus the struggle of the working class over the value of labour-power is a struggle both to determine the value of labour-power and to prevent its price from falling below this value, and this in turn is achieved by regulating the length of the working day, the intensity of work and the level of wages.

From the standpoint of the capitalist, on the contrary, the aim is the maximum production of surplus value, and Marx distinguished two major forms in which this could be achieved. The first is the production of absolute surplus value. 'The prolongation of the working day beyond the point at which the worker would have produced an exact equivalent

for the value of his labour-power, and the appropriation of that surplus labour by capital - this is the process which constitutes the production of absolute surplus value.' (Vol. I p.645) Although he states that 'the production of absolute surplus value turns exclusively on the length of the working day', (p.645), it is apparent that it can be increased in other ways also. A prolonged depression of wages which leads to their new average level being accepted as the value of labour-power would lead to a shrinking of the necessary labour-time and an extension of the surplus labour-time without either a lengthening of the working day or any technical change. Intensification of labour, too, if it becomes accepted and is not compensated by a shortening of the working day or an increase in wages, would lead to an increase in absolute surplus value production. But the length of the working day remains a crucial area around which struggle takes place. All three methods of absolute surplus value production increase the quantity of surplus value^(s) relative to the variable capital paid out as wages (v), and thus increase the rate of surplus value (s/v). This increase is accompanied by a deterioration in the condition of the working class, either through a fall in their living standards, or through more intensive or extensive exploitation of their labour-power.

The second and higher mode of surplus value production is relative surplus value production. 'The production of relative surplus value,' writes Marx, 'completely revolutionises the technical processes of labour and the groupings into which society is divided.' (p.645) In order that relative surplus value should be produced, 'the rise in the productivity of labour must seize upon those branches of industry whose products determine the value of labour-power, and consequently either belong to the category of normal means of subsistence, or are capable of replacing them.' (p.432) The same effect 'is also brought about by an increase in the productivity of labour, and by a corresponding cheapening of commodities, in those industries which supply the instruments of labour and the material for labour, i.e. the physical elements of constant capital which are required for producing the means of subsistence.' (p.432) The effect of these changes in productivity is that the same quantity of means of subsistence can be produced with ^{socially necessary} less labour than before, and consequently its value falls so that less of the working day has to be spent in producing value equivalent to it. Here too the surplus labour-time is increased at the expense of the necessary labour-time without any extension of the working day. But there is no fall in living standards: since the commodities necessary for the reproduction of labour-power have become cheaper, a lower wage can buy the same quantity of commodities as before, or possibly even more. Thus the production of relative surplus value by itself, although it increases surplus value relative to variable capital and thus the rate of surplus value, does not result in the deterioration of the condition of the working class.

III

The struggle over the value of labour-power is as old as capitalism itself, and can be divided into three major phases. The first is the period of 'so-called primitive accumulation', the period in which the proletariat is first formed. The process is a violent and bloody one, for this class of independent producers turned proletarian has yet to be made to accept the discipline of the capitalist enterprise. Marx writes, 'The class of wage-labourers, which arose in the latter half of the fourteenth century, formed then and in the following century only a very small part of the population, well protected in its position by the independent peasant proprietors in the countryside and by the organisation of guilds in the towns. Masters and artisans were not separated by any great social distance either on the land or in the towns. The subordination of labour to capital was only formal, i.e. the mode of production itself had as yet no specifically capitalist character. The variable element in capital preponderated greatly over the constant element. The demand for wage-labour therefore grew rapidly with every accumulation of capital, while the supply only followed slowly behind. A large part of the national product which was later transformed into a fund for the accumulation of capital still entered at that time into the consumption-fund of the workers.' (p.900)

With the balance of forces so decisively weighted in favour of the proletariat, the state had to stop in on the side of capital. First and foremost it was a question of increasing the surplus labour

that is, not only of expropriating the direct producers, but of ensuring that they entered the wage-labour force instead of becoming beggars, robbers or vagabonds. Accordingly legislation was passed to this end; vagabondage was to be punished by whipping, branding, ear-clipping, slavery, imprisonment and execution. 'Thus were the agricultural folk first forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded and tortured by grotesquely terroristic laws into accepting the discipline necessary for the system of wage-labour.' (p.899) Secondly, it was necessary to drive wages, and here too legislation was enacted from the fourteenth century onwards, forbidding the payment of wages above the statutory limit. 'It was forbidden, on pain of imprisonment, to pay higher wages than those fixed by the statute, but the taking of higher wages was more severely punished than the giving of them...The spirit of the Statute of Labour of 1349 and its offshoots shines out clearly in the fact that while the state certainly dictates a maximum of wages, it on no account fixes a minimum.' (p.901) Thirdly, the enactment of legislation compulsorily prolonging the working day also began in the fourteenth century. 'Of course,' Marx remarks, 'the pretensions of capital in its embryonic state, in its state of becoming, when it cannot yet use the sheer force of economic relations to secure its right to absorb a sufficient quantity of surplus labour, but must be aided by the state - its pretensions in this situation appear very modest in comparison with the concessions it has to make, complainingly and unwillingly, in its adult condition.' (p.382) Nonetheless, modest though it appears by comparison with its later exactions from the working class, capital initiates the struggle over the length of the working day with this legislation.

Marx refers to this period as one of formal subsumption of labour-power to capital, i.e. the technical conditions of production are not transformed but remain the same as before. Thus the only means of extracting surplus value is through absolute surplus value production, and all the legislation referred to above is directed to this end. Firstly, against those who are not disposed to produce surplus value at all, to force them to become wage-labourers, i.e. to produce absolute surplus value. Secondly, to increase the production of absolute surplus value by driving down wages, thus increasing surplus labour at the expense of necessary labour. And thirdly, to increase absolute surplus value production by extending the working day. During the period of the formation of the working class, when it has not come to accept capitalist discipline as the order of things, the state comes to the rescue of the individual capitalist, prescribing by law the necessity for the disposed to produce surplus value at a sufficient rate to allow the accumulation of capital.

The resistance of the workers to being totally subordinated to the needs of capital lasts right upto the advent of large-scale machine industry. Even in the period of manufacture, 'the full development of its own peculiar tendencies comes up against obstacles from many directions. Since handicraft skill is the foundation of manufacture, and since the mechanism of manufacture as a whole possesses no objective framework which would be independent of the workers themselves, capital is constantly compelled to wrestle with the insubordination of the workers...Hence the complaint that the workers lack discipline runs through the whole of the period of manufacture. Even if we did not have the testimony of contemporary writers on this, we have two simple facts which speak volumes: firstly, during the period between the sixteenth century and the epoch of large-scale industry capital failed in its attempt to seize control of the whole disposable labour-time of the manufacturing workers, and secondly, the manufactures are short-lived, changing their locality from one country to another with the emigration or immigration of workers.' (p.489-90) The workers remain, in other words, the dominant element in production throughout the period of manufacture. The immanent laws of capitalist accumulation in this period, 'its own peculiar tendencies', cannot be realised because of the resistance of the workers; the balance of class forces is such that this resistance constitutes an insurmountable barrier to the tendency of capital to push the rate of surplus value to its maximum upper limit.

IV

The second phase begins with the introduction of machinery, which has a devastating effect. 'The instrument of labour, when it takes the

...a competitor of the worker himself. The self-valorisation of capital to which the worker is related to the number of workers whose conditions of existence have been destroyed by it... The section of the working class thus rendered superfluous by machinery, i.e. converted into a part of the population no longer directly necessary for the self-valorisation of capital, either goes under in the unequal contest between the old handicraft and manufacturing production and the new machine production, or else floods all the more easily accessible branches of industry, swamps the labour-market, and makes the price of labour-power fall below its value.' (p.557) Thus machinery by competing with the workers compels them to compete with one another and with the unemployed, driving down the value of labour-power to the physiological minimum, and the price of labour-power even below this minimum. 'The instrument of labour strikes down the worker;' (p.559): by means of the machine capital is finally able to batter down the resistance of the workers and thus to realise for the first time its own immanent laws of motion. 'Machinery does not just act as a superior competitor to the worker, always on the point of making him superfluous. It is a power inimical to him, and capital proclaims this fact loudly and deliberately, as well as making use of it.' (p.562) The machine enables the capitalist to wield the power of life and death over recalcitrant workers by threatening to replace them; it is consciously used as an instrument in the class struggle. No wonder, then, that workers first turned their fury against this inanimate thing which oppressed them and attempted to safeguard their livelihood by smashing machinery. 'It took both time and experience,' Marx remarks, 'before the workers learned to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and therefore to transfer their attacks from the material instruments of production to the form of society which utilises those instruments.' (p.554-5)

This is a strange and paradoxical result. The introduction of machinery, which revolutionises production techniques and thus makes possible the large-scale production of relative surplus value, is the occasion not for a decrease but an increase in absolute surplus value production. This compulsion to increase absolute surplus value is felt by the individual capitalist in various ways, but the fundamental reason for it is that 'there is an immanent contradiction in the application of machinery to the production of surplus value, since, of the two factors of the surplus value created by a given amount of capital, one, the rate of surplus value, cannot be increased except by diminishing the other, the number of workers... It is this contradiction which drives the capitalist, without his being aware of the fact, to the most ruthless and excessive prolongation of the working day, in order that he may secure compensation for the decrease in the relative number of workers exploited by increasing not only relative but also absolute surplus value.' (p.531) This point is expounded in greater detail in Volume III of Capital. The rate of profit (p'), which capitalists use as an index of 'profitability', is the ratio of surplus value (s) to the total capital, both constant (c) and variable (v). Surplus value is produced by variable capital alone. Therefore the increase in the weight of constant capital compared with variable capital which occurs with the production of relative surplus value leads to a fall in the rate of profit. The increase in the rate of surplus value (s/v) partially compensates for this fall, but cannot fully do so. (See p.526-1 of Vol.I, also ch.13, especially p.222, of Vol.III) Hence the compulsion to produce absolute surplus value in order to compensate for the decline in the rate of profit becomes felt 'as soon as machinery has come into general use in a given industry, for then the value of the machine-produced commodity regulates the social value of all commodities of the same kind.' (p.531, Vol.I) The important point is that the compulsion to produce absolute surplus value by no means ceases when relative surplus value begins to be produced. On the contrary this compulsion on the capitalist class is a constant one and becomes an over-riding obsession at times when the decline in the rate of profit is rapid and cannot easily be compensated in any other way. The compulsion resolves itself into the necessity to prolong the working day, reduce wages and intensify labour, since 'a prolonged working day (or a corresponding increase in the intensity of labour) and a fall in wages... increase the amount, and thus the rate, of surplus value' by increasing the production of absolute surplus value. (Vol.III p.51-2)

For some reason Marx does not in Volume I consider the increase in absolute surplus value production which results from the lowering of

the value of labour-power through the reduction of the commodities socially accepted as being adequate for subsistence, although this is not a phenomenon which falls outside the assumed framework of a schema within which all commodities sell at value. Yet clearly this is the process he is describing when he writes that 'In the period between 1799 and 1815 an increase in the prices of the means of subsistence led in England to a nominal rise in wages, although there was a fall in real wages, as expressed in the quantity of the means of subsistence they would purchase.' (p.665) And again, 'it is apparent that the piece-wage is the form of wage most appropriate to the capitalist mode of production...In the stormy youth of large-scale industry, and particularly from 1797 to 1815, it served as a lever for the lengthening of the working day and the lowering of wages...We find documentary evidence of the constant lowering of the price of labour from the beginning of the Anti-Jacobin War. In the weaving industry, for example, piece-wages had fallen so low that in spite of the very great lengthening of the working day, the daily wage was then lower than it had been before.' (p.697-8) It is evident that what is being referred to is not a mere temporary or sectoral decline in wages, a fall of the price of labour-power below its value, but a secular decline in the value of labour-power itself. What is happening here is that the value of labour-power becomes historically and morally determined at the lowest possible level, the physiological minimum, and the price falls even below this level. And this is achieved not by a cheapening of the means of subsistence but by a reduction in their quantity, so that the result is a catastrophic decline in living standards, malnutrition, lack of sanitation, disease and premature death.

While absolute surplus value is increased by pushing the necessary labour-time ever lower, it is simultaneously increased by pushing the length of the working day ever higher, and this, too, is finally achieved with the birth of modern large-scale industry. 'After capital had taken centuries to extend the working day to its normal maximum limit, and then beyond this to the limit of the natural working day of 12 hours, there followed, with the birth of large-scale industry in the last third of the eighteenth century, an avalanche of violent and unmeasured encroachments. Every boundary set by morality and nature, age and sex, day and night, was broken down. Even the ideas of day and night, which in the old statutes were of peasant simplicity, became so confused that an English judge, as late as 1860, needed the penetration of an interpreter of the Talmud to explain "judicially" what was day and what was night. Capital was celebrating its orgies.' (p.389-90) For capital, the answer to the question 'What is the working day?' is that the working day contains the full 24 hours minus the few hours of rest without which it is absolutely impossible to resume work. At a time when the working class was in no position to resist such encroachments, it was possible for the capitalists to extend the working day far beyond the maximum length that is compatible with health, converting into labour-time which was needed for education, intellectual development, fulfilment of social functions, social intercourse, free exercise of mind and body, recreation, consumption of fresh air and sunlight, and even, to whatever extent it could, time needed for meals and sleep. Inevitably, the reproduction of labour-power was impaired and could not fully take place. 'By extending the working day, therefore, capitalist production, which is essentially the production of surplus value, the absorption of surplus labour, not only produces a deterioration of human labour-power by robbing it of its normal moral and physical conditions of development and activity, but also produces the premature exhaustion and death of this labour-power itself. It extends the worker's production-time within a given period by shortening his life.' (p.376-7) This, too, is an increase in absolute surplus value production by reducing the value of labour-power, for even if there is no reduction in wages, the same wage is being paid for a greater expenditure of labour-power than before. Hence the value per unit of labour-power falls.

Thirdly, 'that mighty substitute for labour and for workers, the machine, was immediately transformed into a means for increasing the number of wage-labourers by enrolling, under the direct sway of capital, every member of the worker's family, without distinction of age or sex. (p.517) When carefully examined, it is evident that this extension of wage-labour to all members of the proletarian family involves the increased production of absolute surplus value by a reduction of the individual wage on one side, and extension of the collective working day on the other.

This becomes clear if the working class family is considered as the unit of labour-power. (See 'Wage-labour: the Production and Sale of the Commodity Labour-power', reproduced in B.C.P. I) Formerly, the wages of a single worker realised the value of the labour-power of the family. Now many wages - say, on average, four - are necessary in order to realise the value of the labour-power of the same family. Thus each wage realises only part of the value of the labour-power of the family unit - that is the value of the individual wage has fallen. At the same time, the amount of labour-time which the whole family must expend both in order to reproduce its own labour-power and to produce surplus value for the capitalist is multiplied several times over. 'In order that the family may live, four people must now provide not only labour for the capitalist, but also surplus labour.' (p.518) This means the extension of the collective working day of the family. The value of labour-power falls because the slight increase which may occur in the collective wage of the family is more than offset by the increased expenditure of labour-power which must be made in order to secure it.

The consequences of the extension of wage-labour to all members of the proletarian family combined with a maximum extension of working hours for all of them were far-reaching and drastic. One result was the destruction of family life which led Marx and Engels to write in the Communist Manifesto of the virtual non-existence of the family amongst the proletariat. One aspect of this destruction was a further deterioration in health and living standards as the domestic labour which had previously helped to sustain the family ceased to be performed. Marx writes that 'Compulsory work for the capitalist usurped the place, not only of the children's play, but also of independent labour at home, within customary limits, for the family itself'. Note: during the cotton crisis caused by the American Civil War, Dr Edward Smith was sent by the English government to Lancashire, Cheshire and other places to report on the state of health of the cotton operatives. He reported that...the women now had sufficient leisure to give their infants the breast, instead of poisoning them with "Godfrey's Cordial" (an opiate). They also had time to learn to cook...From this we see how capital, for the purposes of its self-valorisation, has usurped the family labour necessary for consumption.' (p.517) Even if we reject the implicit assumption that labour such as cooking has to be performed within the family, it is clear that its cessation, so long as it is not substituted by socialized labour, must lead to a deterioration in living standards. Nor can it entirely cease, since at least part of it is necessary for the reproduction of labour-power even in a stunted condition. Hence the work-load of the women, who are mainly considered responsible for the household work, is raised even above the already heavy work-load which is imposed on them at the place of work.

A second result was the brutalisation of human relationships, between men and women, adults and children, which inevitably followed from the abolition of time, leisure or conditions in which family relationships could develop. For example, an official medical inquiry in 1861 into infant mortality rates of around 25,000 deaths for every 100,000 children alive under the age of one year showed that 'the high death rates are, apart from local causes, principally due to the employment of the mothers away from their homes, and to the neglect and maltreatment arising from their absence, which consists in such things as insufficient nourishment, unsuitable food and dosing with opiates; besides this, there arises an unnatural estrangement between mother and child, and as a consequence intentional starving and poisoning of the children.' (p.521)

Perhaps the children who died in infancy were the luckier ones, for those who survived were subjected from the earliest possible age to monotonous and unremitting toil, wretched living and working conditions and brutal ill-treatment. Under such circumstances, not only was their normal development hampered, but even their potential for development was gradually lost, so that they would never in later life be able to make up for what they had missed at this early stage. So severe was the loss in terms of capacities that even the government was forced to take notice. 'The intellectual degradation artificially produced by the employment of human beings into mere machines for the production of surplus value, finally compelled even the English Parliament to make elementary education a legal requirement before children under 14 years could be consumed "productively" by being employed in those industries which are subject to the Factory Acts.' (p.523) But the implementation of this legislation

at that time was so poor that it might as well not have been passed.

A fourth means of increasing absolute surplus value production is through intensification of labour by means of which a greater amount of surplus value can be exacted in the same time as before because the speed of work is increased. To a limited extent this occurred immediately after machinery was introduced as workers became more accustomed to using these new means of production. As Marx remarks, 'It is self-evident that in proportion as the use of machinery spreads, and the experience of a special class of worker - the machine worker - accumulates, the rapidity and thereby the intensity of labour undergoes a natural increase. Thus in England, in the course of half a century, the lengthening of the working day has gone hand in hand with an increase in the intensity of factory labour. Nevertheless, the reader will clearly see that we are dealing here, not with temporary paroxysms of labour but with labour repeated day after day with unvarying uniformity. Hence a point must inevitably be reached where extension of the working day and intensification of labour become mutually exclusive so that the lengthening of the working day becomes compatible only with a lower degree of intensity, and inversely, a higher degree of intensity only with a shortening of the working day.' (p.533) Thus it is only when the working class movement has gained sufficient strength to win from capital a shorter working day that the real drive for intensification begins. We will therefore return to it somewhat later.

V

The third phase of the struggle over the value of labour-power is characterised by the struggle of the workers against their reduction to a mere means of producing surplus value, a mere appendage of capital. The trade union movement is the form taken by this struggle of the working class to wrest back from capital its own life, to reverse the terms on which it relates to capital - i.e. to make the production of capital a mere means of its own life, which it attempts to determine autonomously and without reference to the needs of capital. What was yielded up to capital all at once has to be won back inch by inch and by dint of bitter struggle, failure and self-education. The first step in the process is to overcome their isolation and associate together. 'The first attempts of workers to associate among themselves always takes place in the form of combinations. Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance - combination. Thus combination always has a double aim, that of stopping competition among the workers, so that they can carry on general competition with the capitalists... In England they have not stopped at partial combinations which have no other objective than a passing strike, and which disappear with it. Permanent combinations have been formed, trades unions, which serve as ramparts for the workers in their struggles against the employers.' (Poverty of Philosophy, Moscow Edition, p.150, 149)

Trade unions, then, are the organisations formed by the working class as an instrument in their struggle over the value of labour-power. By combining, they are able to dictate terms of sale to the capitalists, whereas in isolation, being under the compulsion to sell their labour-power in order to live, they have to sell at any price. In practice the struggle is concentrated around wages and the length of the working day, and therefore constitutes a fight to reduce absolute surplus value production by these means. Through the trade union struggle the working class radically alters itself and circumstances. From an atomized mass it constitutes itself as an organised force; it wins the abolition of child labour, the normal working day, wage increases which allow a raising of living standards as well as a further reduction in the collective working day; education, social welfare measures. The character of the working class is substantially altered.

First and foremost, trade unionism establishes the principle of combination as a necessity for the very survival of the proletariat. 'If the first aim of resistance was merely the maintenance of wages, combinations, at first isolated, constitute themselves into groups as the capitalists in their turn unite for the purpose of repression, and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more

necessary to them than that of wages. This is so true that English economists are amazed to see the workers sacrifice a good part of their wages in favour of associations, which, in the eyes of these economists, are established solely in favour of wages.' (P. of P., p.150) The trade unions proved in practice that the particular interests of individual workers are not in conflict with those of others but can be realised only together with them, and thus firmly established the principle of solidarity. Hence solidarity, instead of being a mere means of obtaining wages, became an end in itself to such an extent that material sacrifices were willingly made in the interests of maintaining it. The first step was made towards the self-constitution of the proletariat as a class for itself, a class ready to undertake its historic tasks; and the proletariat forced bourgeois society too to record this first step inasmuch as the right to form combinations was legally established.

The laws protecting child labour and ultimately abolishing it, together with laws making education compulsory for children below a certain age, had far-reaching consequences. The physical and intellectual deterioration produced by 'transforming immature human being into mere machines for the production of surplus value' was stemmed and halted; although the type of education introduced still involved an enormous wastage of the capacities of proletarian children by failing to develop them, these capacities were not actually destroyed by premature wage-labour. Moreover a real development of capacities did become possible. Apart from the limited contribution made by formal education, the time spent in play, interaction with other children, the free exercise of their muscles and imaginations, contributed significantly to the physical, intellectual and emotional development of children. The conditions for the emergence of a literate working class with a basic education, intellectuals of the working class on a mass scale, the beginnings of the abolition of the division of labour between mental and manual workers, were created by the struggle to abolish child labour and obtain an education for proletarian children. This was one way in which the trade unions combatted the production of absolute surplus value through fighting for a reduction in the collective working day of the proletarian family.

The struggle for equal pay, legal protection, maternity benefits, etc. for female labour also had far-reaching though less unambiguous consequences. While these did not exist, the bourgeoisie had no shibboleths about the sanctity of proletarian family life, no qualms about breaking up the families of proletarians and dragging all members of them into the labour market, sexually abusing proletarian women and depriving proletarian children of parental care and affection. But to the extent that female labour became as expensive as male labour, and, moreover, demanded extra privileges, male labour was preferred, with the result that female labour tended to be thrown out of work. This was supplemented by voluntary withdrawal as male wages were pushed up to a level where they could support a whole family. Like the withdrawal of children from the wage-labour force, this represented a reduction in absolute surplus value production resulting from a reduction in the collective working day of the family.

On one side this made possible the constitution of the proletarian family. The higher individual wages which made it possible for women to withdraw from wage-labour created conditions for an improvement in child-care and a ^{partial} reversal of the brutalisation of human relationships which had earlier taken place. On the other side, however, this family was burdened with all those functions in the reproduction of labour-power where it was most difficult to replace living by dead labour, and these fell mainly on the women. They therefore were compelled to work in isolation, performing work organised on an irrational, individual basis, without any social control over their hours of work, conditions of work or remuneration in the form of means of subsistence.

The proletarian family requires deeper examination from the standpoint of an understanding of the family as such. Engels' attempt to understand this relationship by delving into the distant past bears more resemblance to mythical explanations like, for example, the one in Genesis. While the 'original sin' may be different - in Genesis Woman allows herself to be beguiled into eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, in The Origin of the Family she allows herself to be beguiled into withdrawing from socialised production - the 'curse' is

much the same: she is condemned to bear children in pain and to remain subordinate to man. If, however, 'human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the age' and bourgeois society, as the most developed form, allows insights into earlier forms, (K. Marx, *Grundrisse*, Pelican, p. 105), then it is the proletarian family which contains the key to earlier forms, not vice versa, and it is in the huddled dwelling-places of the working class, 'the springs of life are welling up'. (A. Kollontai, 'Sexual relations and the class struggle'). Here is a family which is propertyless, divested of all ownership or possession of means of production, a family which is not in any meaningful sense a unit of production, and progressively loses its productive functions as society, through schools, laundries, pre-cooked food, etc., takes on functions previously performed in the family. Its tendency of development, therefore, is towards a unit which is held together purely by the personal relationships within it, a sphere in which relationships of love can most fully and deeply be realised, in which children can first develop a consciousness of their own personalities along with the capacity to love. But capitalist relations of production constitute a barrier to the free working out of this tendency, as they also constitute a barrier to the tendency for greater and greater socialisation of labour to be carried to its limit. Capitalism imposes on the family the responsibility and labour necessary for its reproduction; also the sexual division of labour, which impoverishes both men and women, as the mental/manual division of labour impoverishes both mental and manual workers; and as a consequence of these, a hierarchical structure where women are subordinate to men and children to adults. These results, inevitably, a corrosion and distortion of the relationships within it; and this cannot entirely be overcome without the socialisation of housework, the abolition of the sexual division of labour, and the dissolution of all relationships of domination and subordination not from the standpoint of the bourgeois principles of formal equality and independence, but from the standpoint of the proletarian principles of solidarity, comradeship and perfectly balanced mutual dependence where affirmation of oneself is equally an affirmation of the other. (K. Marx, *Early writings*, Pelican, p. 277). The development by the proletariat of its own sexual morality is an important step in its formation into a class, for as Marx correctly noted, the relationship of man to woman 'reveals in a sensuous form, reduced to an observable fact, the extent to which the human essence has become nature for man or nature has become the human essence for man. It is possible to judge from this relationship the entire level of development of mankind.' (Early writings, p. 347).

The struggle for the establishment of the normal working day was protected and bitter. As soon as the working class, stunned at first by the noise and turmoil of the new system of production, had recovered its senses to some extent, it began to offer resistance to the forcible appropriation of its entire day minus a few hours of rest. (Cap. I, p. 390) It forced the passing of five labour laws between 1802 and 1833, but these were successfully evaded by the bourgeoisie. However, 'the factory workers, especially since 1838, made the Ten Hours Bill their economic, as they had made the Charter their political, election cry.' (p. 393) This agitation led to the Act of 1844, which expanded and made more enforceable the provisions of the 1833 Act. There followed an Act of 1847, which was also sabotaged by the capitalists and finally virtually nullified by a Court decision. But this apparently decisive victory of capital was immediately followed by a counter-stroke. So far, the workers had offered a resistance which was passive, though inflexible and unceasing. They now protested in Lancashire and Yorkshire in threatening meetings. The factory inspectors urgently warned the government that class antagonisms had reached an unheard-of degree of tension.' (p. 405) This led to the supplementary Factory Act of 1850. Subsequently the 12-hour working day and then the 16-hour day were brought into force.

The limitation of the working day of adult workers led to a spectacular improvement in their health, and allowed them leisure time for meeting each other, talking, discussing, reading newspapers and other literature. Combined with higher wages and better living conditions, as well as with education for children, this development enabled workers to deepen and widen their knowledge far beyond their immediate experience of work-place and living-place. The cultural level thus acquired is an essential condition for the formation of the proletarian into a class transcending work-places, industries, and other deformations.

which to begin with divide the proletariat and perpetuate competition within it. This is the culture and ideology of a class everywhere pitted against the same social forces and increasingly capable of reflecting on its own struggles. To assume that the ideas of the proletariat are identical with the ruling ideas which are those of the bourgeoisie is to forget that the practice which constitutes the basis of those ideas is a constant struggle against bourgeois society; a struggle which may pass through different phases and take different forms, which may remain implicit for a whole epoch, but which never ceases so long as capital and wage-labour continue to exist. It is apparent, then, that the establishment of the normal working day and higher wages enable the proletariat to undertake a deeper and more comprehensive investigation of its own situation and tasks and thus directly contribute to the creation of a communist culture within the working class.

VI

Seen within the perspective of a whole historical epoch during which the proletariat, through successive cycles of struggle and self-education, constitutes itself as a class for itself, the trade union movement takes an important place. Even though it occurs in a period of capitalist expansion and development and does not directly take up the task of shattering capitalist relations of production, it does struggle against the immanent laws of capitalist accumulation, against the tendency of capital to appropriate the maximum amount of surplus value from the proletariat, against the negation of its humanity which results from the unfettered operation of those laws; it is the means by which the proletariat asserts its humanity in this period. This is why the 'historical and moral element' in the determination of the value of labour-power depends less on 'the habits and expectations with which the class of free workers has been formed' (p.275) which relate to the past, than on the struggles of the proletariat, which relate to its goals, so that it is never the case that the value of labour-power is once and for all determined, fixed and unalterable; on the contrary, the struggle for an increase in the value of labour-power must continue so long as wage-labour itself continues to degrade the human value of the labourers. In the course of this struggle the proletariat alters circumstances, revolutionises itself; it emerges from the struggle different from what it was when it entered it. Thus to see the working class of today purely and simply as the product of capital is one-sided. That capital produces the class of wage-labourers and determines the conditions of its reproduction is true; but the class of wage-labourers as it exists today is the product of over a century of struggle against capital, and would not have come into existence but for that struggle.

In altering the conditions of its own reproduction, the proletariat alters the nature of capitalist production too. The improvement in wages won by the trade union movement speeds up the introduction of machinery. 'The use of machinery for the exclusive purpose of cheapening the product is limited by the requirement that less labour must be expended in producing the machinery than is displaced by the employment of that machinery. For the capitalist, however, there is a further limit on its use. Instead of paying for the labour, he pays only the value of the labour-power employed; the limit to his using a machine is therefore fixed by the difference between the value of the machine and the value of the labour-power replaced by it.' (Cap. I p.515) Where the value of labour-power is very low, machinery may not be substituted for it even though its application leads to a reduction in the labour-time necessary for producing the commodity; 'the field of application for machinery would therefore be entirely different in a communist society from what it is in bourgeois society.' (515n.) Marx cites such examples where the low value of labour-power impedes the introduction of machinery. 'The Yankees have invented a stone-breaking machine. The English do not make use of it because the "wretch" who does this work gets paid for such a small portion of his labour that machinery would increase the cost of production to the capitalist. In England women are still occasionally used instead of horses for hauling barges, because the labour required to produce horses and machines is an accurately known quantity, while that required to maintain the women of the surplus population is beneath all calculation.' (p.516-7) Conversely, an increase in the value of labour-power accelerates the introduction of machinery; then for workers the use of

children were reduced without a reduction in their wages, machinery was substituted for them in the wool industry, and when the labour of women and children in the mines was forbidden, their place was taken by machinery. The development of the productive forces is thus speeded up by the trade union movement although, as always under capitalism, this occurs at the expense of the proletariat inasmuch as it increases unemployment.

Secondly, the shortening of the working day creates 'the subjective condition for the condensation of labour, i.e. it makes it possible for the worker to set more labour-power in motion within a given time.' (p.536) This 'results from the self-evident law that the efficiency of labour-power is in inverse ratio to the duration of its expenditure... In manufactures like potteries, where machinery plays little or no part, the introduction of the Factory Act has strikingly shown that the mere shortening of the working day increases to a wonderful degree the regularity, uniformity, order, continuity and energy of labour.' (p.535) If the shortening of the working day produced an intensification of labour even in industries employing little machinery, in other industries capitalists consciously and systematically used machinery as a means of squeezing out more labour. 'This occurs in two ways: the speed of the machine is increased, and the same worker receives a greater quantity of machinery to supervise.' (p.536) So great was the increase in intensity which followed the introduction of the Ten-Hour Act that workers were now expending more labour-power in ten hours than they had formerly expended in twelve. The speed-up inevitably led to exhaustion, disease, psychological disorders and an increase in accidents, and these in turn resulted in agitation for a further reduction of the working day to eight hours. Ultimately, then, legal regulation of the working day benefited not only the workers but also the manufacturers into whose industries it was introduced; 'their wonderful development from 1853 to 1860, hand in hand with the physical and moral regeneration of the factory workers, was visible to the weakest eyes. The very manufacturers from whom the legal limitation and regulation of the working day had been wrung step by step in the course of a civil war lasting half a century now pointed boastfully to the contrast with the areas of exploitation which were still "free".' (p.408-9)

To the extent, therefore, that the upsurge of the working class combatted the production of absolute surplus value through extension of the working day both collective and individual, and a depression of living standards, 'capital threw itself with all its might, and in full awareness of the situation, into the production of relative surplus value, by speeding up the development of the machine system.' At the same time it imposed 'on the worker an increased expenditure of labour within a time which remains constant, a heightened tension of labour-power, and a closer filling-up of the pores of the working day, i.e. a condensation of labour.' (p.434) There is an acceleration of the increase in the organic composition of capital and simultaneously an acceleration of the rate at which machinery transfers its value to the product as a result of intensified use. This in turn alters the nature of surplus value production and of the labour-force itself.

VII

Altogether, the importance of the trade unions for the working class is immense. Yet it is not entirely accurate to say that 'the value of labour-power constitutes the conscious and explicit foundation of the trade unions.' (p.1069) On the surface of bourgeois society, the value of labour-power appears as the price of labour, and it is this appearance which dominates the trade union movement. This is quite evident from its slogans - a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, equal pay for work of equal value, and so on. In other words, the aim of the movement is the achievement of what is conceived of as an equal exchange between capital and labour; it does not explicitly recognise that even a 'fair wage' involves the exploitation of labour-power, the appropriation of unpaid surplus labour. Consequently, the movement suffers many limitations. Since it is 'labour' which is sold, the concrete form taken by the labour performed becomes an important consideration, and hence trade unions start as unions of workers in a particular trade. Competition between workers in each trade is thus eliminated, but competition between workers of different trades remains and is in some cases intensified. With the development of industrial and general unions, 'labour' comes to be sold to

by larger and more comprehensive agencies, yet these, too, compete with one another on the capitalist labour market. Trade unions limit competition between the workers, but cannot entirely eliminate it. When labourers are thrown out of work, become unemployed, and are hence no longer involved in a direct exchange with capital, they automatically cease to be within the purview of trade unions: hence these organisations are incapable of eliminating competition between employed and unemployed workers and indeed at times raise this competition to a principle, as in the closed shop system. Again, the appearance that labour rather than labour-power is being sold conceals the social character of the labour of proletarian housewives, so that they too fall outside the scope of trade unions and the conditions hours and remuneration of their labour remains without legal regulation. For these and other reasons, trade unions can never be organs of the struggle of the working class as a whole.

Even with respect to the workers whom it directly represents, the trade union suffers from deficiencies. In the first place, although the fight to establish them involves a challenge to bourgeois legality, once established, they derive their strength from the fact that they are the agencies recognised in law as representatives of the interests of the proletariat. Retaining this advantage necessitates remaining within the framework of the law, hence knowledge of the law and legal procedures. This is necessarily a function of specialists. Thus the trade union leadership inevitably become separated from the mass of the workers as a bureaucracy, so that the workers can no longer directly represent their interests through them. Intensification of labour is another example. From the standpoint of trade unionism, an increase in wages is adequate compensation for the increased labour that is extracted with intensification; the detrimental effects on labour-power - through fatigue, mental strain, accidents, etc., - are not sufficiently taken into consideration. This is why the intensification of labour which takes place in a period of capitalist expansion is compatible with trade unions and requires only the victimisation of class-conscious militants, whereas the wage-cuts and extension of the working day which the bourgeoisie have to carry out in a crisis demand the smashing of trade unions as occurred under fascism. (The fascist syndicates are in no sense trade unions - see F. Neumann, 'European Trade Unionism and Politics' reproduced in BCP II) This instance illustrates very clearly both the importance of trade unions for the working class and their deficiencies. For the drastic increase in the exploitation of labour-power which occurs under fascism demonstrates that it is not merely in the early stages of capitalism that the bourgeoisie opposes the existence of combinations of workers and strives in this way to increase the production of absolute surplus value. Hence the importance for the proletariat of defending trade unions so long as wage-labour itself lasts. And yet, inasmuch as they are unable to unite the proletariat, the trade unions prove themselves unable to defend themselves against a determined attack; such a defence, like their original formation, requires the capacity and willingness to wage a 'civil war'.

Ultimately, the limitation of trade unionism is that its basis is wage-labour: to undertake the regulation of the value of labour-power presupposes that labour-power is a commodity, presupposes the capital-wage-labour relation. As the working class struggle enters a phase where it is pitted against capital itself, therefore, the trade unions become inadequate as instruments of struggle and the proletariat has to discover alternative forms of organisation through which it expresses its interests. However, prior to an examination of this transition, it is necessary first to understand the role played by the other major means through which the proletariat struggles for its interests under capitalism - the working class parliamentary party.

DIALECTIC AND HISTORY - WORK, ALIENATION, CLASSES AND
THE STATE IN SARTRE'S 'CRITIQUE OF DIALECTICAL REASON'.

In 'The Wall', a story by Andreiev, a wall divides heaven and earth from each other, leaving only cruel and unnecessary suffering on the side of humanity. People come together and separate in a mad dance; repulsive as lepers, they poison one another's existence. Hating this life, they butt their heads against the wall, trying to make a breach in it. They seek desperately for some way to destroy it. But the mind is powerless before the fatal obstacle, and those who do not submit to fate perish at the immovable wall. . As a symbol of an obstacle to freedom and joy, the wall differs from the real obstacle only in that it is formed of dead stones. But the obstacle to the progress of mankind consists of the people themselves, suffering, wretched, pitiful, yet immovable in their inertia. It is this wall of the inert human mass that we must destroy.

We socialists must be the men of the future. We must foresee this future, and by it, by our vision, we must guide our lives and actions! According to our teaching, in every modern civilised nation there is a vital revolutionary stratum, which creates the future. This is the lowest stratum, the very foundation of the wall - the proletariat. When it comes into motion, then, as the Communist Manifesto says, with the force of a geological upheaval it will destroy everything that rests upon it. It will bring down the entire wall.

Akimov

In this essay I have followed the odious convention of male designations, ('he', 'his'). Conventions are worked matter, in the sense defined below, and this is obviously a matter worked only by males.

All page references are to the original French edition, Paris 1960.

1. Dialectic And History.

We have to be able to imagine how a book like this could have been written, and yet we have no means of imagining it, except through our own action which is a way of living the concrete relationship that unites us to its writer. 'Our understanding of others is never contemplative' (p.98).

It is 1925, you are 20, and in your country, in the universities you go to, there is a deep hatred of dialectical reason. Hegel is unknown to you, and without a knowledge of Hegel, without Marxist teachers, you know nothing of Marxism itself (p.22). You read Capital, you understand everything, it is all quite clear, and yet you have understood nothing. Nothing at all. But slowly you begin to change. In the suburbs, on the horizon of your limited world, for you are an intellectual from another class, there is a vast, sombre mass of workers, and they live Marxism, it is their action, and this mass exerts at some distance an irresistible pressure of attraction on you. So it was not the idea that transformed you, and not the conditions of life and work of the class on your horizon, for you know little about them. It is one linked to the other, it is the class as the incarnation of an idea (p.23).

Now it is the bloody history of this part of the century that will force you to understand the reality of the Class Struggle. It is the war that will shatter all the old frameworks of your thought. The War, the occupation, the resistance, the years that follow. In 1937 a Russian begins to lecture on the Phenomenology at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. You go there, listen to him. Time passes. History has now taken hold of you. For two and half years the Civil War in Spain dominated your life. Spain was a field of battle. You go to the Bibliotheque Nationale and take a reader's ticket. You have embarked upon Hegel's Phenomenology. At present you scarcely make head or tail of a word of it. But History has burst over you and dissolved you into fragments. In France the Popular Front struggles for a few months, then collapses. Madrid is still holding out, but is it true that the Stalinists have assassinated the Revolution? Time passes. You have decided to work at Hegel every afternoon from two till five. It's the most soothing occupation you can imagine. But History has taken hold of you.

The man who lectures at the Ecole knows all this. He knows you are History. He knows that Spain was a battlefield, and that is why you are here. So this is what he says:

Man is Self-Consciousness. Man becomes conscious of himself when he says "I". Now a man who contemplates the world can never say "I". This man who contemplates the world, who is absorbed by what he contemplates, can be brought back to himself only by some force within him that troubles him. A force that agitates you, disquiets you, moves you to Action. This force within you that troubles you is called Desire. Desire is what transforms the world revealed to itself in man's contemplation, into an object revealed to a Subject by a Subject different from the object and opposed to it (A.Kojeve, Introduction to the Reading of Hegel, p.5). Or, Desire is the primordial structure in the constitution of human subjectivity.

So a specifically human reality, that is, a reality that hears itself, is never attainable within the limits of passive contemplation. Desire moves you to Action. Since Desire is realised as Action that negates the given, the very Being of this I which is infected by Desire will be Action, and the universal form of this being will not be Space but Time. So this man tells you that Man who is Self-Consciousness, is therefore History, or Time. Man's Being is Becoming, and this he is only as an Action that negates the world in order to go beyond it as this given world, to transcend it. Man is a perpetual transcendence of the given world, a ceaseless Action riveted to the Future, to something that is not.

2)

Now this is not enough. For my comrade Nizan has been killed, and I am here in the Bibliotheque reading more Hegel. Politzer has been tortured and shot. So this man who lectures must tell you a second thing:

For Man to be truly human, for him to be essentially and really different from an animal, his human desire must actually win out over his animal desire. Now all desire is desire for a value. The supreme value for an animal is its animal life. Human desire therefore must win out over this desire for preservation. Or, Man's humanity only comes to light when he risks his animal life for the sake of his human desire. It is in and through this Risk of Life that a human reality is born, emerges within the order of nature and becomes revealed as reality.

This is how this lecturer wants to explain, to account for, the history that we know, human history, which is a history of Class Struggles. For he goes on to say that to substitute oneself as the value desired by another's desire is to seek Recognition, and this Search for Recognition becomes the fundamental motor of human history. It accounts for the primordial Struggles of mankind, for the social relation of Domination and Slavery, and for the emancipating and humanising role of the Slave's Work. The relation of Domination is born out of Struggle. Here two consciousnesses each seeking Recognition from the other, seek this in the form of their Risk of Life. If both really risk their lives, all consciousness is abolished and history becomes impossible. In the Struggle the consciousness that truly risks its life, that subordinates its animal (non-human) desire for preservation to its human (non-animal) desire for Recognition is the consciousness that wins. It becomes Master. Thus Classes are born. But through this very relation, in which the Master finds himself in an impasse, for he is doomed to abstract identity with Self, and to gaining the Recognition of a consciousness to which he ascribes no Recognition, through this relation the Slave now learns, through Work, to repress his desires in the service of an idea, of what does not exist in the biological sense of the word, the idea of the Master. Thus through his Work, which also makes the Slave the Master of Nature, the Slave finally comes to the same result to which the Master came by his Risk of Life: he no longer depends on the given, natural conditions of existence. (Kojève, op.cit. p.6 ff. p.25 ff. p.48 ff.)

Sartre attends these lectures, hears all of this.

He agreed with Kojève that if there is something like a Dialectical Reason, then its basis is Human Action, or Praxis. The Dialectic 'is the practical rationality of man who makes history' (p.129). He agreed also that Need (besoin), or Desire, is fundamental to a conception of human Action and of History (p.166).

But is it not also true that this man who acts, who makes history, who is Time, acts on the basis of 'conditions' he has not chosen, that these 'conditions' make man as much as he makes them? Thus there is an element in history that remains unintelligible if we follow Kojève throughout. But the dialectic is precisely the intelligibility, the rationality, of History. So there is something wrong in the dialectic that Kojève (and through Kojève Hegel?) explain to us.

The first form in which we can state the problem of historical intelligibility, of the intelligibility of history in terms of man's being as perpetual becoming, as Action, might be

put like this: 'How is one to understand this statement that man makes history if in another sense it is history that makes man?' (p.60). To resolve the problem of historical intelligibility Sartre rejected completely the second thing that Kojève had said. And in a sense the whole of the CRITIQUE OF DIALECTICAL REASON might be seen as an attempt to resolve the problem of historical intelligibility while accepting the first part of Kojève's argument but rejecting the second.

3)

For this second part, the further exposition of the lecturer, allowed for no dialectical reversals. Kojève said that relations of domination are born from an unmediated confrontation of two consciousnesses. Domination established, Work allows the Slave to obtain a status of Self-Consciousness, because the Slave represses his desires in relation to something purely abstract (the Master). Thus eventually, in this dialectic, there is only one moment of true counter-finality (or 'tragedy') - this is the impasse in which the Master finds himself within the relation of domination. Or, Alienation is only the Alienation of the Ruling Classes.

Thus no proper theory of Alienation, of this history which I make depriving the actions (the Work, including the work of Struggle) through which I make it, of their meaning - is contained in this pure dialectic of Self-Consciousness. If Sartre's first point of departure is entirely in agreement with Kojève - the dialectic is the rationality of human Action (p.134), or Man is Action - his second one surpasses (goes beyond) Kojève. The dialectic, which is the rationality of human Action and of History, 'is in a certain sense experienced by man as alien power' just as much as 'in another sense it is man himself who makes it' (p.131). Indeed, Marxism must accept both starting-points and make their contradiction the very principle of historical intelligibility. 'If we want to preserve the real complexity of Marxist thought, then we have to say that in a world founded on exploitation, man is at the same time a product of his product and a historical actor who can anyway never pass for a product' (p.61). And when we seriously consider whether there is a single Marxist who has ever followed through this contradiction, or dialectical circularity, and transformed it into the very principle of historical intelligibility, when we seriously answer this in the negative, then the CRITIQUE, which follows through this contradiction, emerges as probably the most important work of theory produced by any Marxist since Marx's Capital.

2. The Dialectical Priority of Action (Praxis).

Let us formulate the problem of dialectical intelligibility in the following terms: 'We have to seize Action and its result from two inseparable points of view. That is of its objectification (of man acting on the world that surrounds him) and that of its objectivity (of this world he has totalised acting back on man)' (p.284). In the pure dialectic of Self consciousness, there is only the objectification of human activity. But a truly dialectical reason is a reason that is also non-dialectical, or, if there is a dialectic, then, obeying its own law of development, there must be within this dialectic, a non-dialectic.

Action can be defined as 'an organising project which surpasses the given material conditions towards some end (fin) and which through work inscribes itself in inorganic materiality as a reshaping of the field of action and a reunification of the means deployed towards a given end' (p.687). This can be called the dialectical structure of all human action, whether individual or common, and its definition necessarily refers us to a moment that is not Action, the moment of matter, or materiality. In fact, human action 'implies a material agent (the organic individual) and a material organisation of an enterprise on matter through matter' (p.158). In reworking the field of action, this organism, which in its very Being is Action, which is a practical organism, operates a synthesis, it 'totalises' the multiplicity of inert matter, or Totalisation is this relation of interiority which mediates between the parts of a whole. Totalisation as the dialectical structure of human action makes the notion of Time possible, which Totality does not.

4)

In the CRITIQUE Totalisation forms the specific structure of what we call History. History is Totalisation or it is nothing. And Sartre's project is to investigate not History itself, but the 'static conditions of its possibility' (p.155), that is, the logical conditions of possibility of a totalisation of this order. Hence it is also possible to say that the CRITIQUE asks itself, "How is History possible?" in the same fundamental sense in which Kant, in his Critique of Pure Reason, asked "How is experience possible?". In fact, the CRITIQUE OF DIALECTICAL REASON surpasses Kant's Critique, because human experience is experience of history, it is something intrinsically historical, and therefore to ask - how is experience possible? is to ask what makes history and the experience of it possible.

Let us repeat: in the CRITIQUE Sartre is not concerned with Concrete History, but with its internal 'logical structures' or conditions of possibility. These are established, or developed, at successively more complex levels of intelligibility, all of which, even the most concrete or synthetic, form only abstract moments of dialectical experience, for all of them form part of the Regressive phase of the dialectical movement. In Vol.2, to be called the CRITIQUE OF DIALECTICAL EXPERIENCE, Sartre will 'recompose' the historical process in a reverse moment of progression once its conditions of possibility have been seized and established abstractly.

Three overall moments of dialectical experience dominate and shape the internal structure of the CRITIQUE (Vol.1). The Action of the Organic Individual, the negation of this in Matter, and the Action of Groups. Each of these are levels of intelligibility of the historical process. The Action of the organic individual finds its dialectical limit in its own work as the exteriorisation of interiority (p.158), or in what Sartre calls Worked Matter, and passes over at this limit into a Dialectic of Passivity, or an Anti-Dialectic. This Dialectic of Passivity is the specific moment of experience, or level of intelligibility, corresponding to Action that returns against itself as something bearing the permanent seal, or stamp, of Inertia. (Thus the theory of Alienation, or the dialectical experience of Alienation as an a priori possibility of human action, is contained in this moment.) Here, in exploring the negation of organic action (or individual action) in and through Worked Matter, the Series emerges as the fundamental type of social ensemble. Common Action, or the (constituted) Action of Groups, or grouped ensembles, forms the final moment of this entire movement. Sartre proposes to argue that Social Classes 'do not possess a unique and homogeneous type of being, but exist and form at all levels' (p.155).

Once we have followed through this movement it should be possible to comprehend the practical status, or dialectical significance, of the entire range of ensembles conceivable in any historical society: not only of Social Classes as the most important of these, but of the State, of Mass Parties, Trade Unions, and of the 'unorganised masses'. But this depth of dialectical intelligibility which allows one to differentiate the practical status of a lynch mob from that of a strike committee, or individual from social capital, or groups from classes, and to distinguish rigorously between 'societies', 'systems', 'structures', between historical action and historical process, will only be possible dialectically, because at each level of intelligibility, in each moment of the dialectical experience, new determinations are established.

Yet this entire movement has a basis or a ground principle. Sartre himself vacillates between two conceptions of this, and appears to have shifted imperceptibly from one to the other in the course of the actual writing of the CRITIQUE. One conception of this ground principle states the dialectical priority of the Action of the Organic Individual in the entire movement.

5)

This priority is signalled through its description as the 'Constituting Dialectic' of history (p.154,178). The strongest argument that Sartre brings forward for this conception is the notion of the Action of the Organic Individual as an 'unsurpassable limit' of the Action of Groups, or of Common Action. The former forms the 'very foundation, always present and always concealed' of the latter (p.643). The alternative conception asserts not so much the priority of individual action over common action (of a Constituting Dialectic over a Constituted Dialectic) as the priority of Action itself over Worked Matter. And since what matters here is Action, the ground principle can just as well be formulated as the dialectical priority of Constituted Action over Being (or Worked Matter, or the Practico-Inert). So Sartre can write, 'Without constituted Action, everything disappears, even alienation, since there is nothing to be alienated, even reification since man is by birth an inert thing and one cannot reify a thing' (p.731).

At any rate, accepting the weaker formulation the principle that sustains the whole movement of the CRITIQUE is that of the dialectical priority of Action over Being. Without conscious projects, without human aims, or objectives, or desires, history vanishes. If human relations are only the passive product of something we call 'material circumstances', then such relations are by their very nature reified and it would be impossible to understand what their reification could mean (p.180). Now Action is Dialectic. To assert the priority of Action over Being, or of Praxis over the Practico-Inert, or of Dialectic over Anti-Dialectic, is to argue that at any given time relations among men 'are the dialectical consequence of their own activity' (p.180), no matter how mystified those relations appear in the eyes of men themselves.

This World in which I no longer recognise myself is a World I have created. More concretely, without Work (which is Action, and its model-type) there would be no 'mode of production' (p.671).

3. Domination by Worked Matter: Scarcity and Counterfinality.

What movement is it, however, that leads from one to the other, from work as a living action to the mode of production as its inorganic synthesis, from freedom to alienation, from the translucidity of my aims to my experience of necessity?

Man 'is' only as a 'becoming'. Man is Action, he is a practical organism. But Action would be impossible to conceive, at least in the historical world that we know, without Desire, that is, Need. Or, Man is a practical organism with material needs, Need is the primordial relation of the Dialectic of Individual (Organic) Action. 'It is the first totalising relation of this material being, man, with a material ensemble which he is part of...This initial totalisation is transcendent in the sense that the practical organism finds its being outside itself in inanimate being' (p.166). To find its being in nature the practical organism transforms itself into its own tool, acts on the inert objects of its external environment through the intermediary of the inert body which it is (as material organism) and which it makes itself. Here instrumentality, end and work are given together: the organismality is projected as totalisation of the movement through which the living body utilises its own inertia to overcome the inertia of things. Now it is Scarcity, an absence of what the organism looks for in the environment, which by transforming the organic totality into a pure possibility, entails that the organism is no longer simply the destiny of its function, but its aims, or its end. 'In the first instance, action is nothing but this relation of the organism as external end and future to the present organism as a (organic) totality thrown into danger' (p.168). And this

6)

'action born of need is a totalisation whose movement towards its own end actively transforms the environment into a totality' (p.170). The Practical Organism now traverses the surrounding world as a Project, it unifies a field of instrumentality around itself, and in and through the creation of this instrumental field transforms inert multiplicity into totality, so that 'this inert plurality which has become totality, ... is in itself the end fallen into the domain of passivity' (p.171). In short, we can say that 'human Work, that is, the primordial Action through which the organism produces and reproduces its own life, is entirely dialectical: its possibility and its permanent necessity rest on the relation of interiority which unifies the organism with its environment and on the profound contradiction between the organic and the inorganic orders, both present in each individual; its initial movement and basic character are defined by a double contradictory transformation: the unity of man's project gives to the field of action a quasi-synthetic unity, or the key moment of Work is that in which the organism makes itself inert to transform the inertia that surrounds it' (p.174). Here Sartre adds, 'This criss-cross which opposes the human thing to the man-thing will recur at all levels of dialectical experience; however, the meaning of Work is established by an end, and Need, far from being a force that pushes the worker from behind, is, on the contrary, the lived revelation of an end which is to be attained', in this case the reproduction of the living organism itself (p.174).

Matter as something purely non-human and inorganic is governed by the laws of exteriority (and open to penetration by non-dialectical reason, Science). Within dialectical reason and dialectical experience, matter is inseparable from its human functions, or meanings, and contains these only to the extent that 'man has already attempted to confer unity on it' and to the extent that 'it comes to form the passive support of the stamp of this unity'. Matter in its human function, or as the passive synthesis of human activity, might be called the 'passive motor of history' (p.200).

In history as we know it, our human history, the one-sided (non-reciprocal) relation of surrounding matter to man manifests itself in the specific and entirely contingent, factual, form of Scarcity. Scarcity 'is a fundamental human relation' (p.201), but inconceivable in a dialectic which suppresses matter as a mediation between men (p.192). 'What no one has so far tried to do is to explore the kind of passive action which is exerted by matter over men and over their history when their action returns to them as something stolen from them, in the form of Counterfinality... History is more complicated than a certain simplistic form of Marxism supposes, and man has to struggle not only against Nature, against his own social milieu, against other men, but also against his own Action as something become other. This primordial form of alienation finds its expression through all other forms but it is independent of them and on the contrary their very basis' (p.202).

Now 'abstractly Scarcity might be seen as a relation between the individual and his environment. But in practice, and historically, this environment is an already constituted field of action that refers to each of its collective structures (what these are we shall see later) and the most basic of these is precisely Scarcity conceived as a negative unity of the human multiplicity (of this concrete multiplicity)' (p.204). Thus if Work forms the basic type of totalisation of matter by man, the primordial totalisation of men by materiality manifests itself 'as the possibility of a common destruction' of all mankind 'and as the permanent possibility for each individual of this destruction coming to him from matter through the action of other men' (p.204). 'Scarcity realises the passive totality of the individuals of a society 'as the impossibility of coexisting' (p.205). Sartre is of course emphatic that this is not a proposition about Concrete History (about this or that historical situation) and that he is still dealing with a 'very abstract moment' of dialectical experience. What

counts here are the 'structures of dialectical intelligibility' (p.205). Totalised passively into an inert and negative unity by matter, 'Man constitutes himself as other than Man' (p.206). 'The mere existence of each individual is defined, through Scarcity, as the perpetual risk of non-existence for an other individual and for all individuals. Or, better still, this constant threat of annihilation that hangs over myself and everyone is not something I discover only in others but I am myself this threat as an Other' (p.205). Thus there is in man (in all men) 'an inert structure of inhumanity' (p.207) which is simply man's interiorisation of his own negation by matter. In fact, 'the historical process is impossible to understand without this permanent element of negativity, which is at once external and internal to man - the permanent possibility of being, through his very existence, the person who makes others die or whom others make die - in other words, without Scarcity' (p.221).

Scarcity is the first concrete validation of 'that basic discovery of dialectical experience, that men are mediated through things to the very extent that things are mediated through men' (p.165). The negative element in history is man's interiorisation of Scarcity as a relation to other men, that is, as the negation in man of man by matter. The circularity might be redescribed as follows - 'there is a dialectical movement and a dialectical relation within Action between Action as the negation of matter and matter... as the negation of Action' (p.230). Sartre clarifies this conception by saying that 'This negation of Action, which has nothing to do with defeat, cannot be translated in Action except in terms of Action itself, that is, its positive results, in the form in which these become inscribed in an object return against it with the status of objective and negative commands' (p.230).

To develop this new moment of dialectical experience - the return of an Action against itself in its objectified form - and as negation of its enterprise - Sartre returns to the conception of Action itself. 'Action (praxis) whatever its concrete nature, is basically an instrumentalisation of material reality. It envelopes the inanimate thing in a totalising project that imposes on it a pseudo-organic unity. By that I mean that this unity is naturally the unity of a whole but that it remains social and human, that by itself it does not obtain the status of exteriority that defines the molecular world. If unity persists, it is, on the contrary, through material inertia. Since this unity is only the passive reflection of human action itself, that is, of a given enterprise carried through in given conditions with given instruments and in a historical society at a given stage of its development - the produced object reflects the entire society. Only it reflects it in the dimension of passivity' (p.231).

This dimension of passivity, of the absorption of human action by the material inert, is the sphere of man's domination by Worked Matter, or of his domination by himself as matter. 'In surpassing the given material conditions man objectifies himself in matter through Work: that means he loses himself so that the human thing comes into being' (p.240). Loses himself - his action becomes absorbed in a passive and inert synthesis of innumerable other actions, and his finality (his ends) reappears as Counter-finality (as a negation of his ends). The Chinese peasant household that cuts wood from the surrounding forests - this is a living organic action motivated by need - creates an absence of forests and through deforestation, through this absence of forests, periodic massive floods and famines. 'Worked matter', materiality that absorbs and passivises human action, 'reflects our activity back to us as inertia and our inertia as our activity' (p.247). It is this dimension of passivised action, of worked matter as an alienated (counterfinal) objectification of praxis, that Sartre calls the Practico-Inert.

The Practico-Inert, this 'site of violence, darkness and magic' (p.358), of reversed Action (p.235), is the specifically non-dialectical moment of the CRITIQUE. Sartre explores this

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level of historical intelligibility. Praxis as Inertia, and the experience of this Inertia as a Praxis-without-authorship as Necessity - on the illustrative model, taken from Braudel's major study, of the circulation of precious metals in the Mediterranean world of the Renaissance (p.235 ff.). To start with, there is no Being, no materiality or matter devoid of human significance - at least not within the field of human experience. 'At any given historical time, things are human to the very degree that men are things' (p.248). Matter as the inert and passive support of human action, as an inertia that retains its meanings, refers us to those very projects, to human Action, as dialectically fundamental. In fact, there could be no experience of Alienation (of domination by Worked Matter) if man were not basically Action. If he were pure materiality, neither Action nor Alienation would be conceivable. 'Slavery is possible only because there is freedom' (p.248). Only two choices are possible at this level. Either man is ontologically other than himself and one then elaborates a philosophy founded on the hatred of man. Or man is himself, he is the active source of this Destiny which confronts him as his future. And if man were pure Being, the only Time conceivable would be the time of degradation, a dialectic moving in reverse from the complex to the simple, in short, involution and dissolution would then replace evolution. Thus at the start of Spain's ineluctable decadence and crisis there lies human Action. The regime of Philip II accumulates the precious metals. That is, organises their extraction, transport, melting and minting into coins. But there is no human Action that does not crystallise its meanings in matter, and no matter that does not condition human Action through the passive unity of its prefabricated meanings (p.238). Thus 'the Spanish government accumulates gold but there is a flight of gold' (p.241). If the accumulation of gold is founded on a type of human mediation defined by a common, deliberate Action that unifies certain men in a single enterprise aimed at a single objective (p.239), then this flight of gold implies another form of human mediation which we shall call 'serial'. For on the margin of that common enterprise, of the systematic extraction and accumulation of gold by the regime, there are other men who are others in relation to its common Action. 'The synthetic interiority of the group', of the Spanish regime, 'is traversed by the reciprocal exteriority of individuals formed by their material separation' (p.240). Gold leaves Spain, flows across her borders, through these Others. And their serial action finds its own external link in the inert mass of gold and the inert idea, inscribed on each piece of gold, that the precious metals are wealth. Then thirdly, there is the Counterfinality that turns the abundance of gold, of 'wealth', into negativity, into mass impoverishment throughout the Mediterranean littoral. The value of each piece of gold diminishes as the total mass expands, the total sum acts negatively on its parts as if it were a whole (p.242). Prices rise - employers cut wages - there is a crisis on the labour-market. No defence of wages is possible: atomised and massified, the wage-eaters of Spain form a vast inert system conditioned from the outside (p.243). And here one form of materiality collides with another: depopulation augments the value of each unit of labour-power. Wages begin to climb upwards. In short, 'worked matter, through the contradictions that it contains within itself, becomes for and through men the fundamental motor of history' (p.250). The historical decline of Spain is inconceivable without the role of the precious metals, of human things, of inert materiality on which men have inscribed their meanings and which absorbs their action and re-exteriorises it against itself as their Destiny. 'In worked matter the actions of all men become unified and acquire a meaning: that is, they constitute for all of them the unity of a common future'. This future, the decline of Spain, bears the stamp of pure Counterfinality. The enrichment of Spain is the source of its decline.

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4. The Inert Commands of Worked Matter: Machine Work.

The image worked out through this illustration is now applied directly to the factory. 'Action as unification of inorganic plurality becomes the practical unity of matter. The material forces assembled into the passive synthesis of the tool or the machine produce actions: they unify other inorganic dispersions and thereby impose a certain material unification on a plurality of persons. ... the Action inscribed in the instrument through Work in the past defines conducts a priori..' (p.250).

In our experience the typical symbols of the practico-inert are not simple objects and tools, but whole material ensembles. We refer to 'the factory', to mean either a combination of instruments surrounded by walls, or the personnel within it, or both indifferently. 'If individuals were only a free Action organising materiality..we could not really talk about this typical unity present in the social field as passive activity, active passivity, Action and Destiny. For this kind of social object to have a being, man and his products must exchange their qualities and their statuses within production itself' (p.251-52).

The level of dialectical intelligibility has shifted from the purely abstract moment of the action of organic individuality to the moment of its negation in worked matter. We deal with men now from the angle of their domination by worked matter - and with human Action as a temporalisation within the field of worked matter. 'This man remains a man of need, of Action and of Scarcity. But as a man dominated by Worked Matter, his activity no longer finds its source directly in need, although need remains fundamental to it: it is Action aroused in him (*suscitee en lui*) from the outside by Worked Matter as the practical command (*exigence*) of the inanimate object. Or, if you like, the object comes to define (*designer*) its man as this person from whom a certain type of conduct is expected' (p.252). The machine defines this man as a worker, as this or that kind of worker, and the work that this man performs as an 'Action aroused in him from the outside', is 'the work of Others, of all others, of whom he is one'. Through the machine the worker becomes this 'Other from whom certain gestures are expected' (p.254).

Sartre contrasts the reciprocity of ends, desires desiring desires, that defines Action in common through structures of Reciprocity, with the inert finality of machine work. 'What one person may hope of another, when their relation is a human one, is something defined in reciprocity. This hoping is a human act. The question of passive command does not arise here.. praxis as such can unify with praxis in a reciprocal action, each can formulate his ends through a recognition of the ends of others, but no praxis in the strict sense can ever formulate a command, simply because commands are not part of the structure of reciprocity' (p.253). On the other hand, 'the demand of a tool that expects to be operated in a definite way, according to a definite rhythm, etc. undergoes a basic transformation through its very materiality: it becomes a command (*exigence*) because it acquires the double character of otherness and of passivity. In fact, this command constitutes itself in each worker as something other than him (he has no means of modifying it; he can only conform to it..it does not enter the dialectical movement of human performance) and in the same blow it constitutes each worker as other than himself: insofar as the worker is defined by his Action, this Action finds its source not in need or in Desire..it is not the totalising realisation of his project but, as an Action constituted around an external objective, the Action is, in the agent himself, the Action of an other and it is this other that objectifies itself in the result' (p.253).

The worker who operates a machine engages in Action (praxis), but this Action is the Action of himself as other than himself, of an indefinite multiplicity of persons capable of the same 'definition' through that instrument. 'Through materiality it is man as other than himself who affirms his dominance over man: the machine has to be preserved in its market condition and the practical relation of man to matter becomes man's response to the commands of the machine' (p.254). Of course, individuals interiorise the inert commands of matter to re-exteriorise these as commands delivered by men: it is through the apparatuses of control and supervision in the factory, that the machine enforces a certain type and rhythm of work in the worker (p.256).

'The machine shapes its man to the very degree that man shapes the machine. ..it constitutes its operator as a machine that must operate machines. All relations within the agent of Action are reversed by it; as a categorical imperative, the machine makes the worker a pure means, but a conscious means (for he knows its imperative); as a source of wages, it transforms his Action (or his labour-power) into a commodity, ie, an inert product that preserves its power of unifying a field of action. Finally, the machine becomes a living thing, a pseudo-organism only to the extent that the worker makes himself a force of inert exteriority (expends his own substance..). The machine defines and creates the reality of the man who operates it, makes him a practico-inert being who will be a machine to the degree that the machine is human and a man to the degree that the machine remains a tool to be used.. At the same time, the machine determines his future as a living organism, just as it defines the future of its owner. The difference here is that it defines the worker's future negatively as the impossibility of living long. Not only through the counterfinalities' that it represents - pollution, job diseases, accidents, etc, - 'but also because it represents for the worker ..the permanent threat of low wages, technological unemployment and deskilling. And the rationality of this lies in the real meaning of industry: the machine was created to replace man. in the machine the worker discovers his being as indifferent generality, his Action as something already materialised in tasks that are predetermined as inert commands to obey, his future as powerlessness..' (p.269-70).

Now 'to the extent that the machine imparts to the worker the meaning of a practico-inert being, devoid of any particular interest (and of any possibility of having one), it defines the worker as a general individual..this does not mean that the machine produces abstract beings without individuality: the human Actor remains, even within his reification, a constituting and dialectical totality', a practical organism. 'In fact, each (general) individual expresses the particularity of his Action in the way in which he constitutes himself, and allows himself to be constituted, as generality, and this generality of each defines the relations of all of them; each discovers in the other his own generality. This inert generality as the milieu of the working class in the early period of industrialisation cannot be seen as a real and totalising unity of workers (in a given factory, town or country)..it comes to them through worked matter, and forms a constitutive moment of the class as the negative unity of a Destiny that condemns all its individuals. But in this very act, in the negative milieu of the general each worker perceives this general destiny of the individual worker and of all workers (and not yet of the class as such) in the very generality of his own destiny. Or, if you like, he sees his worker's destiny, that is, the negation of the possibility of his own existence, in the generality of machines as something owned by the generality of others. In the period of Capitalism, the contradiction of the machine is that it creates and denies the worker in the same blow: this contradiction, materialised as a general destiny, is a fundamental condition in the growth of Class Consciousness, that is, in the negation of the negation' (p.270 - 71).

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5. The Notion of "Interest"

Thus machine work is Action, (all work is Action), but Action which forms a response to the commands of worked matter, 'activity as passivity, power as impotence...' (Marx), or Passive Activity. The transition from the formal to the real subsumption of labour into capital can thus also be described as a dialectical transcendence of Action into Passive Activity. This is a transcendence (dépassement, Aufhebung) and not an abstract substitution, because 'materiality as the inflexible necessity of the practico-inert surpasses the free actions of individuals only to conserve them within itself as the indispensable means by which its heavy machinery works' (p.376). Moreover, the transition from Action to Passive Activity is itself the object of a living Action - the action of the capitalist in enforcing the norms of abstract labour, that is, in 'breaking up the old psycho-physical nexus of qualified professional work' (Gramsci, 'Americanism and Fordism').

This remains incomplete, however, because this action - of reorganising the methods of work and styles of life of a large mass of the population - is itself definable within the dimension of worked matter. Asked, why would a capitalist do this?, we would automatically reply, 'because it is in his interest to do so'. Thus the notion of 'interest' emerges as a further specification of the field of the practico-inert.

Interest is dialectically definable as one's being-entirely-outside-self-in-a-thing and the conditioning of one's action (praxis) by its categorical imperative (p.261). 'Taken on his own, in his free and simple action, an individual has needs, desires, he is a project, he realises his ends through work. But in this abstract and quite fictitious state, the individual cannot be said to have an interest...Interest is a certain relation of men to things within the social field..It is something discovered in the practico-inert moment of experience when man constitutes himself in the external environment as this practico-inert ensemble of worked matters whose practical inertia he installs into his real person' (p.261). An individual can be said to possess an interest from the moment when a material ensemble defines him in his personal particularity, and when its preservation and expansion at any cost conditions his activity as categorical imperative (p.263).

However, Sartre immediately goes on to suggest that the notion of interest, as a practico-inert relation, is impossible to conceive without reference to the structure of Alterity (of otherness) that defines the field of the practico-inert. If initially interest appears only as a 'relation of men to things', the mediated structure of this relation is what counts later. 'As always interest is born out of Alterity as the primordial relation of man to himself..and only sustains itself in the milieu of alterity' (p.272). The definition of interest is thus proposed in a more complete formulation as 'the negative and practical relation of man to the field of action through the thing which he is outside, or..a relation of the thing to other things in the social field through its human object' (p.267).

The obvious example of this relation is the factory and its bourgeois proprietor. 'The French industrialist who in 1830 cautiously introduces English machinery 'because it his interest' in fact has no relation with this machinery except through the intermediary of his factory.' His desire to expand is nothing else but the real expansion of his factory. (p.263). 'If he imports machinery from England, it is because the factory' which he is, as this thing outside himself, 'commands this within a competitive field of a given type, and thus because the factory commands this as something other and something conditioned by

others..The decision is dictated to him, in the form of a command (exigence) by the competitive milieu (defeat competitors by selling at a lower price) but negatively, because competition, and the possibility that other factories will import English machines, make his position a dangerous one insofar as he is constituted as a factory. But hardly has this machinery been installed, than the interest is displaced. His interest in the machinery, that is, his subjection to his being-outside-self, was the factory. Now the interest of the factory becomes the machine itself: once it comes into operation, it is the machine that determines the volume of production, it is the machine that compels him to break the old balance between supply and demand and to search for markets, that is, to condition demand through supply. The interest of the factory has changed, the caution and stability which characterised this interest are transformed into calculated risk and expansion; the factory-owner has installed within the walls of his enterprise an irreversibility. And this irreversibility (the machine does not stop) defines him in his being as well as in his action, or rather it realises in him..the identity of Being (as a structure of inertia) and of Action (as totalisation in course). But, in the antagonistic environment shaped by Alterity (in this case, competition) the interest of each factory owner is the same to the very degree that it is something constituted as other; or, if you like, the necessity to achieve a perpetual reduction of costs by installing ever newer and more modern machinery comes to each as his interest (as the real command of his factory) insofar as it is the interest of Others and insofar as for the Others it constitutes itself an interest as the interest of the other..' (p.263-64).

So in the name of 'interest', being-outside-self as worked matter unites individuals and groups through the negation of each by all and of all by each as a negation defined in alterity. 'Which amounts to saying that the interest-object acts (through the mediation of the individual) under the negative pressure of the similar commands developed in other interest-objects. At this level it is impossible to say ..whether for the industrialist profits represent an end or a means: in the movement of interest as negative command - that is, in the necessary, incessant transformation of means of production - the greater part is reinvested in the enterprise itself; in one sense, the aim of these transformations is to maintain or to increase the rate of profit, but in another sense profit is the sole possible means by which the capitalist realises these transformations..in the unity of the total process, the factory as the possession-power of an individual or of a group of individuals constitutes itself, in its preservation and expansion, as its own end,..From the impossibility of halting the movement of production without destroying the object to the necessity to search out new markets for an expanded volume of production and to expand this volume to stay on the market, one comes up against the movement of growth and motivation of a quasi-organism, that is, of an inverted image of the organism, a totalised false totality where man loses himself so that it exists, a totalising false totality that regroups all the persons of a field of action in the negative unity of Alterity' (p.265).

The machine is the capitalist's interest in the sense defined above. But, as we saw, it is also a determination of the field of action of the working class. However, to the very extent that the machine is the capitalist's interest, it is the worker's destiny or fate. Like the capitalist, the worker has his being in the machine. 'But the machine is not, cannot be the interest of the worker. The reason is simple: far from objectifying himself in it, it is the machine that objectifies itself in the worker' (p.268-69). We saw this in the previous section. In the machine the worker finds his being as indifferent generality, or the machine designates, or defines, the worker as a general individual.

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This inert generality, which is the milieu of the working class, comes to workers from worked matter, as a false negative unity, 'the negative unity of a destiny or fate that condemns all of them' (p.271). Now the movement of the working class, or the constitution of the class into a 'class for itself', and no longer simply 'as against capital', is the very process by which this inert generality (which is also the first definition of the class as being) becomes transformed into a unifying totalisation, in the course of which and as which the working class actively negates its being-outside-self as destiny, and transforms a material destiny into a material interest.

This implies that the class negates not the machine as such, or the machine in itself - for this would be a negation of the worker who is a product of the machine, or whose being is the machine - but negates the machine 'insofar as it is destiny', that is, 'in a given social order, commands man without allowing him to command it in return' (p.271). The capitalist, in appropriating the machine as his interest, constitutes the destiny of workers as an interest of the Other experienced and lived by them in the form of a counter-interest (destiny), and the class struggle, the totalisation through which an inert generality and identity becomes a class interest, is thus a negation of the negation, a negation of the capitalist's interest as the worker's destiny, or a negation of the interest of the Other as negation. 'The combination of workers, if it takes place, is indissolubly linked to the constitution of a general interest' into this class interest (p.273).

So 'interest appears as the inorganic materiality of the individual or the group in the form of an absolute and irreducible being that subordinates to itself their action as a means of preserving itself in its practico-inert exteriority. Or, if you like, it is the passive and reversed image of freedom, the only form in which freedom can produce itself (and become aware of itself) in the infernal world of practical passivity' (p.279).

Interest and Destiny are practico-inert relations among men, and classes obtain their first status of intelligibility at this level of practico-inert relationships. Class being is collective being-outside-self-in-worked matter, practico-inert being. 'As practico-inert being, class being comes to men through men across the passive syntheses of worked matter' as their 'being outside in the thing which is their fundamental truth and their reality' (p.286). Sartre then proposes to show how the being of classes as inorganic materiality forms the inert status and objective limit on their Action.

6. Class Being as Practico-Inert Limit: Anarcho-Syndicalism

'The complex based on coal and iron found its typical resonance in the so-called "universal" machine. By that one means a machine, eg, the lathe, whose task is indeterminate...and which can accomplish quite different jobs as long as it is directed, set in motion and controlled by a skilled and expert worker. The universal function of this machine creates the specialised character of its operator...in this product its inventor envisaged a certain kind of worker, to be exact - qualified workers capable of carrying through a complete operation, from start to finish, that is, a dialectical action. This practical aim is installed into the machine in the form of a command: it entails a reduction of physical effort as such, but demands dexterity. It demands the attention and concentration of a man completely freed of all secondary tasks: through this the universal machine determines first of all the form of recruitment; through the employers it creates possibilities of employment at comparatively higher levels of wages; a structured future now opens for certain sons of workers defined by the dispositions or situation

necessary for apprenticeship. But in the same blow it creates an inferior proletariat which is both a direct product of the appearance of this better-paid elite of workers, and a layer required by the machine itself as the ensemble of manual labourers who in each factory have to gravitate around the professional workers, obey them, and free them of all inferior tasks that others can perform. Thus the machine of the 19th c. establishes a priori a passive structure within the working-class: I shall call this structure a solar system; the manual labourers, defined quite simply as individuals without specialisation (hence perfectly indeterminate) gravitate in groups of five to ten around a professional worker defined by his specialisation. The machine organises persons. Only, we should note that this human organisation has nothing to do with a synthetic union, with a community founded on an act of consciousness; the hierarchy becomes established in a mechanical dispersion of massified pluralities and quasi-accidentally. It is precisely the material inertia that permits this strange and rigid hierarchical unity within dispersion, just as it is the congealed action of matter, as the mechanical future of a group, a class or a society, that a priori establishes this hierarchical order as an ensemble of abstract relations that has to unify some individuals and that will impose itself on these individuals, whoever they are, within the temporal framework of production: already the factory, with all its machines, has decided the ratio of manual workers to professional workers, has established for each worker the probabilities' defining his future within the hierarchy.

'In this way the universal machine imposes differentiation on the workers as a law of things; but at the same time and through the very process we described for Spanish gold, it becomes its own idea. The property of a capitalist, it rejects its operator to the ranks of the exploited, sustains and intensifies the contradiction that opposes the propertied class to the working-class; yet through the skills it demands, it engenders in the hands, in the body of the man who works it a humanism of labour. The professional worker does not see himself as a 'subhuman conscious of his subhumanity'. Of course, his product is stolen from him, but his indignation as an exploited worker finds its deepest source in his pride as a producer. Only the 'wretched of the earth' can change life, do change it every day, only they nourish, clothe and house the whole of mankind. And since the machine is selective, since, through the very competence that it demands and that it creates, it constitutes labour, for the professional worker, as the honour of the exploited, in the very same act it produces the manual worker as an inferior being with a lower wage, a lower technical value. To be sure, in relation to the capitalist this worker is someone exploited; but what is he in relation to the elite of workers? Perhaps someone who never had the chance (his father was poor, he started work at twelve), or someone who lacked the courage or the talent. Perhaps all of this. A tension exists. This is not a real antagonism, at least not at first: towards the professional worker the manual worker harbours ambiguous feelings. He admires him, listens to him: in acquiring a political and sometimes a scientific training, the professional worker only develops the idea which the machine has of itself and of its operator. That is also why he sees himself as the militant wing of the working class. Militant action is something one imposes on the manual worker: he is someone who follows. But sometimes this worker gets the impression that when it participates in his struggles, the elite of workers does not always defend his interests.

'Everything I have said so far is inscribed in Being. The inert idea of work as a point of honour, the technical operations, the differentiation of workers, this hierarchy, the tension that flows from it - all of this is a product of the machine, or, if you want, it is, in a given factory, any factory at all, the practico-inert Being of the workers themselves in the specific sense that their relations are the machine itself through its operators. But what one has to show is that these passive structures

will later form a definite inertia within the workers' action groups - there are a certain number of structures that no Action will be able to transcend, they are unsurpassable. I have shown elsewhere* how anarcho-syndicalist organisation, product of the free efforts of the elite within the class, was destined, even before unification was realised, to reproduce in the form of a 'voluntary' association structures that were or had been established in certain enterprises through the mediation of the universal machine. But it would be a sad mistake to suppose that it was the machine that engendered the Syndicalism of 1900 in the way that a 'cause' produces its 'effect'. If this were so, the dialectic and the human race would jointly disappear: indeed, the humanism of labour is the material being of the skilled worker: he realises it in his work, with his hands and eyes, he receives it in his wages which express both exploitation of this worker and the hierarchy of all exploited workers; finally, he brings it into being through the very influence that he exerts over the manual workers and through that obscure conflict, still difficult to grasp, that opposes him to them. But he has to discover what he is. That means that his movement to unite with other skilled workers and to negate exploitation in practice necessarily occurs as the projection of what he is in his Action itself: with what will he surpass exploitation if not with what exploitation has made of him? the basic movement through which the skilled workers combine and overcome their antagonisms is at the same time this affirmation of the humanism of labour. The anarcho-syndicalist condemns exploitation in the name of the absolute superiority of skilled, manual work over all other forms of activity. Practice only goes to confirm this basic principle: in the epoch of the universal machine it matters little whether the manual labourers go on strike or not, the absence of a few professionals, difficult to replace, is enough to disorganise the entire factory. Without knowing this, the elite of specialist workers abolishes the means of protesting against the exploitation of the manual workers: of course, their condition provokes anger in them, but they cannot justify their claims ... by making work skills their basis. In a period when machine work demands a kind of lordship of (skilled) workers over their assistants, the basic principle of worker humanism lies at the origin of a new discovery that one might call the paternalism of the workers' elite: the skilled worker has to educate the unskilled worker, involve him, galvanise him with his own example, etc. Thus the association that they form against capitalist exploitation reinvents, rigorously but freely, all the conditions that materiality has imposed on alienated man. What interests us, here, is this subtle nothingness within positive being - the impossibility of surpassing this humanism. In fact, it was surpassed when the deskilling of the professional workers brought about by the specialised machine reshaped the unity of the working class (in the advanced countries of capitalism) on the new foundations of the interchangeability of all specialised workers. Now work resumed for all of them its negative features: exhausting compulsion, alien force. Of course, workers still had the pride of being workers, but because they were the rockbed of the whole society and not because the particular character of their operation set them apart. A humanism of need... slowly began to crystallise. But it is of crucial importance that anarcho-syndicalism could never accomplish this transcendence on its own. The reason is moreover simple: this practice and this theory represented the very life of the group and this active group (either a union or the workers of a factory) was nothing else than a reunification and reorganisation of the struggle on the existing structural bases. It was really impossible that the professional workers, who were better educated, more combative, more effective, who through their mere absence could bring work to a stop, should really, in practice, enroll into mass organisations that would have given the majority to the less educated and less militant workers. If such mass unions are today possible and necessary, it is because together with the structure of the class the form of

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struggle has changed- the interchangeability of specialised workers compels them to adopt the line of mass action. This equality among workers came from changes in the means of production and in the practical tasks entailed by these changes: therefore it is true, that is to say, it proves its effectiveness every day. But in 1900 it would have been an idealist position since any strike at all would have exposed its ineffectiveness at that time. How could you uphold the equality of all workers at that time when strikes could really succeed without the manual labourers, and when the latter could never win a strike on their own? And how could you ascribe the same importance to all opinions when the manual workers, less educated, more hesitant, without the profoundly respectable sense of pride of the skilled workers, really formed an inert mass to be aroused and galvanised into action? ..The professional worker came to identify the real, complete human being with himself. And this false identification (false not in relation to the employers but in relation to the masses) was an unsurpassable limit because this identification was the workers themselves or, if you like, it was the expression, in theory and practice, of their own practico-inert relationships.. when the problem of the kind of structure that unions should have was posed (should unions be craft or industrial?), the theory and practice of syndicalism became false, they became an inert resistance to an effective reorganisation of the class; their proletarian humanism became false when it led certain syndicalists to dream of the constitution of a proletarian chivalry; their relation to the masses became false when the docility of the manual workers gave way to growing dissatisfaction. And above all the ideological and practical ensemble that expressed the struggles of a class structured by the universal machine became false when it prevented the trade unions from enrolling and organising the new masses, already brought into being before 1914 by the first specialised machines. But how could that exploited class fight for a proletariat other than itself? And what was this proletariat if not precisely one structured in its being by the universal machine and infected passively by the idea of 'work as honour' which its elite interiorised into its activity? In deciding who they were, it was the machine that decided what they could be: it deprived them of the very possibility of imagining any other form of struggle at the same time as it gave to their affirmation of themselves, that is, to their ethico-practical reinteriorisation of its commands, to the development, in time, through action, of the structures prefabricated by itself, the only form of struggle that was effective against this class of employers in these circumstances. In short, here Being is a prefabricated Future that determines temporalising action negatively. Or, if you like, it appears in action.. as its congealed and unseizable contradiction, as the impossibility of going further, of wanting more, or understanding more, as an iron wall within translucidity... To us who belong to another society (still capitalist, but one whose structures have commanded new sources of energy, new machinery, and mass production) the limits interiorised in the action of that class appear as the objective significance of the structural relations that prevailed in the period of anarcho-syndicalism.

.... Any practico-inert limit of a human relationship can always (this is abstractly possible) be discovered by the men whom it unites as the objective Being of their relationship. But in this very moment of discovery, their experience of this limit as their real Being shows them that it has always existed, interiorised but petrified, in their living actions and even their moment of subjectivity. .. But here we should insist above all that this prefabricated objectivity does not stop action from being a free creation of time and effective reorganisation of the field of action in the pursuit of ends revealed through and posed in the course of this action. In fact, anarcho-syndicalism was a living and effective struggle which slowly forged its own weapons and starting from complete lack of organisation created trade union unity. Today its historical role even appears to have been that of establishing the first organs of unification within the

class. Or, better, anarcho-syndicalism was nothing but the working class itself at a certain stage in its development and creating in embryonic form its first collective apparatuses. What one has to understand quite simply is that its specific form of hierarchical unification of the class was already inscribed in the human plurality by the universal machine: through its commands, this machine had structured hierarchically ordered groups of workers. Moreover, that...purely human action (action that required a theoretical understanding of one's situation, an organisation of its own field, continuous effort, courage, patience, the experience in practice itself, through which new means could be established...) only realised humanly, that is, in action, dialectically, the sentence passed by the universal machine on that proletariat. Moreover, this was a sentence that had to be realised: without human action the class would have remained this inert collective which we shall discuss in the following pages'.

(* Sartre has analysed the case of anarcho-syndicalism in much greater historical detail in Situations VI (Paris 1964) p.274 ff. This analysis can be consulted in English in his book The Communists and Peace.)

7. Class Being as a Status of Seriality.

As the practico-inert status, the passive status, of all human Action, whether individual or common, Class Being defines a 'sort of collective being which is the foundation of individual reality itself' (p.304). Defined ontologically, then, a Class is that 'inert collective being that forms the inorganic and common materiality of all the individuals of a given ensemble' (p.304). 'This is basically what one refers to when one speaks of 'class'. For in the first place one does not mean by 'a class' either the active unification of all its individuals within the organisations that that class has itself thrown up, or merely the natural identity of a collection of individual products of one type'. Not the first of these because we speak of 'divisions within the working class' and this presumes some deeper unity on the basis of which the class can pursue its active self-unification (mazdoor ekta). Thus the divisions appear as 'accidents' which cannot affect the 'fundamental substance' which remains, ontologically, one, the class itself.

But what is the dialectical intelligibility of this type of ensemble which we call the Collective (eg, classes)? Sartre directly anticipates the movement of dialectical experience at this point by drawing Groups into the argument. As between Groups as the bearers of some common project or action, and Collectives, there is a relation of ontological priority in favour of the latter. The Group itself can only emerge within the matrix of the Collective, and its emergence can never entirely suppress the Collective (p.306). A working class that actively totalises across its entire length and breadth is historically exceptional: this kind of situation characterises the periods we call revolutionary (p.357). The Class Group constitutes itself against Class Being, as its negation, yet Class Being remains a form of unity of workers as a class. It is their unity as their Class Being, their social materiality. This relation of logical anteriority can be stated also by saying that when the active Groups disintegrate, the Collectives into which they disintegrate conserve no trace of them (p.384). Moreover, as between the Groups, it is the Collectives that form their mediation, or their field of battle (p.608). Secondly, 'the Group is defined by its enterprise and by that constant movement of integration which attempts a pure Action'. The Group is Action, its being is totalisation. On the other hand, 'the Collective defines itself by its being...it is a material and inorganic object of the practico-inert field in the specific sense that a multiplicity of individuals produces itself in it, under the sign of the other, as a real unity in Being, a passive synthesis...the inertia of this

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object penetrates each individual action as its fundamental determination by the passive unity, that is, by the pre-given interpenetration of all individuals as Others...' (p.307f.). The abstract moments of dialectical experience are now reintegrated in the kind of being which is called being-collective. These moments were-reciprocity as a basic human relation, the separation of individual organisms, the field of action with its dimensions of alterity, inorganic materiality as man's being-outside-self in the inert object. In the collective the abstract opposition between 'reciprocity as a relation of interiority' and 'solitude of organisms as a relation of exteriority' finds its dialectical resolution, it finds itself surpassed and conserved in a new type of 'external/internal' relation which Sartre calls Seriality. Seriality is a structure of 'false reciprocity', and the Collective only realises the unity of interpenetration of its individuals to the extent that it structures their relations in seriality (p.308).

A multiplicity structured in seriality can be called a Series. In the Series I have my being-outside-self in matter, in an inert object which is my interest, or my destiny. As a collective interest/destiny, this inert object unifies me with others. The mediation is passive (p.405). Our exteriority as organic individuals becomes determined, through the passive mediation of this inert object which is our collective interest/destiny, as identity. Exteriority mediated as identity is identity as alterity, as otherness. This identity in alterity means quite simply that in the Series I am the same as others. My being is being-other. I become myself as other than myself, and that is why I am the same as others. 'Each is the same as others because he is other than himself' (p.311).

If the constituting rule of the Group, of common action, will be, 'The other is the same as myself', that of the Series is 'The other is the same as myself as other than myself' or 'I am an other'. Alterity is the governing law of the Series, or of serial multiplicities, multiplicities structured in seriality. Other than serial identity as the identity of alterity, and other than the passive or inert unification of the Series through a collective object, which is our common being outside-self, as our interest/destiny - there is 'the experience of powerlessness (impuissance) as the real link between the members of a Series. In fact, the Series is something revealed to each individual the very moment he grasps within himself and in others their common powerlessness in suppressing their real differences' (p.325).

The notion of Seriality is not only fundamental to the CRITIQUE, it is, among its concepts, one of the most fertile. There is a distinct suggestion in the CRITIQUE that the dimension of Seriality forms the fundamental moment in the growth of working-class consciousness. (In this respect Sartre's own approach to the history of the working class in its period of emergence contrasts quite sharply with that of E.P. Thompson.) Sartre argues that in the early part of the 19th century the working class found its negative 'collective object', the object through whose passive action it was totalised serially, in the ensemble of machines (of means of production) owned by capitalists. We have already seen that the common interest of the class 'can only be the negation of this negation, that is, the negation, in action, of a destiny experienced as common inertia'. For the class practical organisation - whose structures of intelligibility we have yet to come to - is a 'human command', it is means and end together, for it is both its means of struggling against its destiny (that is, against the men who within a given society make the machine the worker's destiny) and a future projected dissolution of the practico-inert field within a perpetually active social organisation that will govern production as a concrete totality. Practical organisation of the class thus implies 'a connected negation of two reciprocal aspects of the

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field of action: negation of the collective object as our destiny and corollary negation of the multiplicity as seriality' (p.351). Seriality is here the 'being-that-must-be-surpassed' (p.351).

Now no common action could actually surpass this being that must be surpassed unless this being already contained within itself some structure of unification. We have seen that at the practico-inert level, that is, at the level of Class Being, such a structure of unification is established by Seriality itself. The primordial sense of class unity is serial impotence itself conceived as the force of alterity (p.352). 'In this sense, the common class being of the workers in 1830 is, in the presence of the machine which is their destiny and of the organs of repression and constraint, the seriality that defines their mutual relations, because this profound powerlessness is at the same time their unity.' (p.352). Despite the concentration of large masses of workers into the same labour-process, dispersion remains a key factor, Sartre writes. 'The indefinite plurality of conflicting relations...is what establishes the class as an indefinite series that everywhere finds its serial unity in the powerlessness of the individuals who form it. Exploitation becomes the passive unity of all workers (and not merely an identical condition) in the sense that each worker lives the isolation of others as his own isolation and lives their powerlessness through his own. As a collective, the class becomes something material made up of men - it constitutes itself as a negation of man and as the serial impossibility of denying this negation' (p.353). The class is 'the destiny one cannot change'. 'It is not a practical solidarity' at this stage, but on the contrary, the absolute unity of destinies determined by the absence of solidarity. 'Each worker feels himself confirmed in his inertia through the inertia of all others...the Other, for this proletariat which is only emerging, is first of all the serial totalisation of others...that is, of all who represent for any given worker the possibility of unemployment or of work at lower wages' (p.353). Thus at this level Class Being is a serially structured milieu, or 'the inert-being of seriality, as the basis of all combination, is really the unity of the workers in their being' and class action 'can only emerge on the basis of this fundamental collective-being' (p.357), and presupposing its negative unity.

Now it follows that this serial and practico-inert status which is the being of a class could never produce a Class Struggle if there were not a permanent possibility of dissolving seriality (p.644). The notion of class interest, as the possible negation of the destiny of a class, forms an initial and merely abstract determination of this possible unity which is the dissolution of seriality (p.644). If Being were the only determination of Social Classes, that is, if classes were reducible to their ontological dimension, whose structures we have been establishing thus far, then Class Struggle would become incomprehensible. Struggle is a type of Action, and Action at the level of the practico-inert, eg, of classes, implies either the passive activity which is Action as a response to the inert commands of the practico-inert object (machine work) or the dissolution of Seriality, the practical totalisation of individuals into Groups, which is Action as a negation of the inert. The definition of classes in terms of their being (that is, as practico-inert objects) forms only a first step to understanding the complex reality of classes in history. Sartre will say later that 'classes are dynamic ensembles of Groups and Series' (p.610), that they form a perpetual movement of mediation between their various serial and grouped multiplicities (p.643 f.). Thus a more concrete definition of classes implies a new level of intelligibility, that of Common Action, or of the Group.

8. The Group.

'The Action of the Group finds its source at the very heart of the practico-inert, in the opaque materiality of powerlessness and inertia, as the transcendence of this materiality' (p.357). It follows that the practico-inert is itself a field contained between two negations. It constitutes itself through counter-finalities and the mediation of worked matter as the passive synthesis of serial relationships - hence as negation of organic individual action. On the other hand, the Group emerges within the collective as a practical negation of seriality (p.359).

Sartre distinguishes three basic moments of dialectical experience in relation to the Group. There is no suggestion that these form the actual stages in the life-cycle of any given group. The Group can disintegrate into Seriality at any stage. The three moments of the dialectic of common Action are: the Group in Fusion, the Organised Group and the Sovereign-Institutional Group.

The Group is not something that 'is', it is an Action, an incessant totalisation. Praxis is its only reality (p.438). 'It has neither existence (it is not an organism) nor being (is not a material totality)' (p.451). The fundamental structure in the constitution of this practical, totalising entity which has neither existence nor being, but is pure Action, is the relation of double mediated reciprocity. Two consciousnesses may stand in a direct, immediate relation to each other, but this relation can be revealed as a reciprocal link only through the intervention of a third consciousness which through its totalisation of their unity establishes their double totalisation as a unified totality (p.184-197). The first dialectical determination of the Group member is that he is this 'third consciousness'. As a third, each totalises the reciprocities of the others. And this mediated reciprocity, reciprocity presupposing three consciousnesses, that defines the relations between Group members is itself double: each third mediates between the Group (this project, this objective, this Action which is the Group) and all the other thirds, and the Group, as this Action or project, mediates between all the thirds (p.404). This man comes to the Group as I do. He is the same as myself. In him I see myself coming to the Group (p.406). In this type of human mediation, the very reverse of serial mediations, not objects but Actions take on the decisive role of mediation.

The Group in Fusion may be defined as a group whose only constitutive structure is the relation of Double Mediated Reciprocity. Its Being is Pure Action. In such a group there is pure freedom - that is, the absence of all inertia. And precisely because of that, because its unity is purely practical, the unity of this action, such a group runs the risk of disintegration into serialised dispersion once the Action which it 'is' (the task which it accomplishes) is over. Now, the problem of the Group that seeks to survive is related to the problem of Being, that is of permanence (p.435). A group that seeks to survive is a group that takes itself as its own immediate objective (p.437). Its permanence becomes in each member the common objective. But at this moment it acquires a 'contradictory status because it wants the sort of permanence that will define it in inertia and it wants free totalisation, or, if you like, it wants free totalising action to enjoy the status of inert synthesis' (p.438). Now the group's unity, no longer securable by the Action around which it totalised into fusion (as the Group in Fusion) must come into being 'as an inert synthesis at the very heart of freedom itself' (p.438). Freedom creates its own inertia, consciously, voluntarily, to establish the permanence of the group. This new status, freedom producing inertia, is the Oath. The Oath retains the structure of mediated reciprocity: through it 'each third affirms the permanence of the group' (p.440). It is, however, an inert determination of the future, or this 'inertia is above all negation of the dialectic at the heart of the dialectic itself' (p.440). From now on, whatever the future development, the totalisations in motion, 'one element

will remain non-dialectical - the belonging of each member to the group. The group will of course enter new dialectical combinations that will transform it but its common unity cannot thereby be changed' (p.440). In this moment 'we again discover the dialectical law we have encountered from the very start of our experience: the re-exteriorisation of inorganic inertia is the foundation of instrumentality, that is, of the struggle against material inertia within the practical field. The group now tries to transform itself into the tool that it will use against the Seriality that threatens it with dissolution' (p.440).

The Oath is a free practical invention founded on the fear of Alterity, which is the 'rule of a practico-inert social field' (p.319). When you take this oath, then in fact you are saying, "I shall not be the Other through whom the group dissolves" (p.441). The origin of the Oath is fear, of the third person and of myself as a third, and this is a fear born from the absence of any fear, of any specific pressure through which a common action might become possible now (p.447). Thus 'the basic reinvention at the heart of the Oath is the project of substituting a real fear produced by the group itself for the external fear' that has receded (p.448). As an action performed on itself the group can only be coercive - through the oath the members of the group, as common individuals, create a 'status of Violence'. Each freedom protects itself at the risk of its own annihilation. Freedom constitutes itself, freely, as Terror (p.449), or, being in the group as a limit no member can surpass 'produces itself as the certainty of death if this limit is surpassed' (p.449). Terror is the fundamental status of the Group under Oath (p.450). 'This is the birth of humanity', Sartre writes, for every organisation founded on the reciprocity of the Oath signifies the victory of man as Common Freedom over Seriality (p.453). And Comradeship, brotherhood, fraternity is, finally, only the positive form of this Terror (p.455-56).

Now the rudimentary Action of the Group in Fusion was something 'undifferentiated'. The Action was everywhere the same, everywhere common, in each individual it was total. Here there was complete translucidity, no inertia, no control, no organisation. As pure translucidity the action of the group in fusion merely retained and amplified the characteristics of organic individual action (p.459). At this level the common individual is the organic individual who interiorises the multiplicity of thirds and unifies it through his action (p.462). The problem of the intelligibility of Common Action is thus posed not at this level, but at the level of a group that has secured its permanence in the status of Terror and that now performs the reflexive action on itself that is called 'organisation'. The problem of intelligibility only arises at the level of the Organised Group.

Here it is not the notion of Organisation itself that poses the problem. 'The term 'organisation' denotes at once the internal action through which the group defines its Structures and this group itself as a structured activity followed through in the field of action on worked matter or on other groups'. Organisation implies a complex reality 'which we can describe in these terms: the group acts on its transcendent object only through the mediation of its individual members, but these individual agents only perform action within the defined framework of the organisation, which means that their practical relation with the object is directly conditioned by their function relation' with each other in the form in which the group has defined this through its distribution of tasks (p.460).

Rather, the problem is posed specifically by the increasingly objective appearance of Organised Groups as structured ensembles. What are Structures in that case? That is, how are Structures intelligible? They are 'strange internal realities, at once organised and organising, which are both the synthetic products of a practical totalisation and objects always open to a rigorously analytic study...inorganic skeleton and the defined powers of each over each...mechanical elements and yet expressions of a live integration into a unitary practice, contradictory tensions of

freedom and inertia' (p.487). This implies precisely that, however remote and alienated in appearance, Structures are a product of human activity - more exactly, a synthetic product of that Common Action of groups on themselves which we called 'organisation'. Structures are not the result of organic Action, but of Group Action, and groups acquire Structures in organising themselves. To be born within a group/structure, eg, an exogamous clan, a subcaste, 'is to produce oneself as a specification of the group and as an ensemble of functions (responsibilities and powers, credits and debts, duties and rights)' (p.493). Born within the regime of its Oath, the common individual finds himself under Oath, but as free agent in possession of his freedom, not as passive object receiving his status from the outside (p.491). Within this group/structure it is the common individual's aim to preserve the permanence of its relations across the changes in the position of its individual terms (p.493). (Hence the diachronic stability of the often exceedingly complex and ramified structures of exchange studied by Levi-Strauss. Yet, despite their stability and their crystalline appearance, these kinship systems belong not to the practico-inert but to Common Action - they are not passive but active syntheses.)

Dialectically, Structures represent the 'necessity of freedom'. Their intelligibility remains the Group as a totalising Action, that is, at this specific moment of experience (the Organised Group) 'the free adherence of each (common individual) to the community.. as the (material) inorganic being of each'. 'This necessity which is exteriority structuring interiority is exactly the reverse of the practico-inert: the latter, as we saw, appeared to us as passive activity; the former, on the contrary, constitutes itself as active passivity. This being-inorganic of each ... comprises a large area of indetermination: it is the foundation of my Action, its framework, it circumscribes and channels it...but my Action itself is not reducible to this skeleton: it is more and something else: it is the free concrete realisation of a particular task.' (p.494). To fight inertia the Group infected itself with a primordial inertia (the Oath); it absorbed into itself that element of passivity which it needed to survive. 'But the Group in itself is precisely not a passive synthesis and its passivity', the oath, organisation, 'only retaining the active synthesis which is Action' (p.495). So even as Structures groups are not and can never be totalities, passive syntheses, they are and remain totalisations, multiplicities totalising themselves to totalise the field of action within a common perspective. Organised Groups are 'a complex dialectic of Action and Inertia, of totalisation and of elements already totalised' (p.497). To repeat: it contradicts the very notion of the Group to conceive of it as a purely objective reality, inert synthesis, totality, etc. This remains true at the level of the Organised Group where, in fact, the common individual is no more than the common action which must realise itself through individual actions (p.467) or where 'individual action is a mediation that cancels itself' (p.470) or where, finally, reciprocity as a relation of interiority among individuals loses its original character of something concrete, immediately lived, spontaneous to become a worked and centrifugal reciprocity, a relation of Absence (p.479).

Yet there is a level, Sartre will write, at which the Organised Group obtains the appearance of a merely practico-inert ensemble, such as of 'the complex formed by a machine and by the workers who use it for some definite job' (p.539). And significantly, Sartre appears to suggest that it is only finally at this level (Organised Group) that we can draw in the notion of a Constituted Dialectic. 'By this we should understand the following: here', in organisations, 'one is not dealing with a dialectical action that realises the unity of several individuals, but, on the contrary, with individual, constituting dialectics that invent and produce through their work a dialectical apparatus in which

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they lock themselves up with their instruments. What counts here is that Common Action is at once an Action and a Process' (p.539f). So in posing the problem of the intelligibility of organised action Sartre introduces a new concept, Process.

9. Action and Process: Taylorised Machine Work.

The Group is not an organism, even if the organic structure is its immediate, illusory appearance within the practico-inert field, that is, in relation to others (p.381). We know that the Group is simply the unity of a multiplicity interiorised by each common individual and that the Oath is itself the practical expression of this unity. 'Everything would be quite simple if to the Action of the Group, as a living and concrete temporalisation, there really corresponded a living and concrete Group - in short, a Gestalt, an organism or a superconsciousness - that ..objectified itself. In fact, we know that the Group..exists nowhere else except everywhere, that is, it belongs to each individual action as the interiorised unity of the multiplicity' (p.507). The Action of the Group, Common Action, 'is not the temporalisation of an organic unity', of a real practical organism, 'but the multiplicity negated', that is, interiorised as unity, 'and instrumentalised' and this negated and instrumentalised multiplicity 'temporalising itself and unifying itself in the common action through the mediation of individual' actions (p.507). But what is this unity of local (dispersed) and heterogeneous (functionally differentiated) actions? This is one form in which Sartre formulates the problem of the intelligibility of Constituted Action.

The Group is unified multiplicity. Its constitution thus presupposes, abstractly, the two dialectically opposed moments of Unity and Multiplicity. Now even when the Oath has resolved their opposition through interiorisation, that is, fights multiplicity by interiorising multiplicity, subjecting it to an eternal unity, this interiorisation of multiplicity is something perpetually defeated, or there is always a 'dispersive limit to the unification of a group' (p.536). To fight the perpetual reappearance of multiplicity, organisation acquires a vertical dimension. 'Against the dispersive force of the practico-inert field, the group has to create apparatuses of mediation, control and inspection whose basic function lies in putting the various sub-groups into relation with one another or with the central apparatus' (p.536). At this stage the 'internal action of the group on itself merely intensifies to fight the multiplicity that begins to erode it' (p.544). If organisation developed initially as exteriorisation of the inertia of interiority it evolves now as the interiorisation of the inertia of exteriority (p.537). Such a group becomes Process.

'What difference is there, then, between Process and Action? Both are dialectical: they are defined by their movement and their direction by a specific determination of the field of possibilities through which the meaning of their various moments can be grasped. But Action reveals itself immediately through its end..at any given moment of Action, it is the agent who produces himself in such and such position, makes such and such effort..I have called this Action free for the simple reason that, in the given circumstances and starting from a given need or danger, Action creates its own law in the absolute unity of its project (as mediation between the given, past objectivity and the future objectification). Process is not comparable with this Action of the individual. But it cannot be compared with an avalanche or a flood for that matter. In fact, it conserves within itself all the characteristics of individual Action since it is itself constituted by the directed action of a multiplicity of individuals; but at the same time these characteristics receive within a process the modification of passivity, because, through the resurgence of multiplicity, each here presents itself as a passivity (and implies passivity as everywhere in all the heres) and activity appears as an unseizable elsewhere..In the Group/Process practical activity, as an unseizable and fleeing event, serves as organising mediation between the inertias one

experiences' (p.541-42).

'Process obtains the appearance of an object', which does not mean that its status is totality. 'But the movement which animates the process does not belong among those which I can produce as a practical organism; it belongs to the category of the movements I experience insofar as I have my being-outside-myself-in-the-world. In other words, it reveals itself as a reality in relation to which I shall always be outside, even if it envelopes me and drags me along, and which will always be outside me, even if with everyone I contribute to its production. This reality is structured in interiority', it is something mediated through my action, now defined as a function, 'but it has no interiority' (p.543). The law of Processes can be called 'the transcendent law of interiority' (p.543). As a type of Common Action, Processes are totalisations, they preserve their 'finality, but reversed, passivised and concealed by necessity' (p.543).

The concept is a deeply significant one, if only because despite their appearance of pure objectivity, despite their appearance of inevitability, no determinism is involved in processes. Organic individual action remains their unsurpassable limit, even if they escape the control and of course often the comprehension of any given individual (p.549). It forms the key to those highly bureaucratised mass parties which touch the very limits of dialectical intelligibility in appearing as enormous passive objects that simply consume their energy in internal reactions, absorb the human activities of their members and persist through a sort of inert perseverance (p.544). Later, the concept will be used to establish the dialectical distinction between Exploitation and Oppression. For the moment Sartre applies it to re-examine the work process under Taylorised factory production.

'Taylor is without any doubt the first of those persons we call "organisation men". His aim is to increase productivity by eliminating wasted time. If a worker's action comprises five successive operations, then five operators who each perform one of these operations five times over will consume less time than five workers each producing the entire action once. The organiser's invention consists here in replacing temporalisation with passive temporality. An Action is a praxis that creates time (une praxis temporalisante). And, in a certain sense, each elementary operation is also a creation of time (in fact, it too is an action, complete in its realisation...). But what ensures that the living totality of the action disappears is that the five operations are spatially segregated and separated by dead intervals of time. Each operation is passive in relation to the one following, they do not form part of a single temporal development, but each is separated from the other...through the negative exteriority of inertia. Moreover, each single operation has been measured and its "normal" duration established' by reference to the non-dialectical time of inorganic materiality. As such each operation 'reintegrates a passivity into its free active accomplishment: instead of being conditioned by the result to be attained and the free organism that acts, it develops in time dialectically by conserving within itself as its internal skeleton the passive temporality' defined by the watch. Now 'the action is constituted by five acts determined by their interiorisation of a passivity and separated by the passive flow of time (that is, by the abstract skeleton of the time of others - of employers, of other workers, of clients, etc). It disappears as organic action. Moreover, in isolated, detail work each individual is dequalified as an individual agent of action: his operation is no longer an action; at the same time, he becomes a common individual (but in alienation - in this sense the example surpasses the cases considered so far): now his operation depends on the first two operations, for example, and at a distance it conditions the following two. In any case, even in this amputated or mutilated form, even when extorted from his muscles and hands through an external rhythm, the operation remains his practical operation and despite its

determination in inertia, realises itself dialectically through him, even at the most elementary level. But what counts here is that the action based on skill, destroyed by Taylor, stolen from the professional workers and redistributed to the four corners of the factory, rediscovers itself objectified in its totality as the manufactured product of five separate workers. The reification of work is undeniable..but what is striking is that this reified work, because it is action, recovers in inorganic matter its synthetic character as a free determination of the field of action. .Without further information, nothing allows to say whether such and such specimen of this product has been created by a multiplicity of actions external to each other and determined in passivity or by a single totalising process. The first moment of this example shows the absolute homogeneity of an integral dialectical action and a decomposed alienated operation, of free temporalisation and stolen temporality. This homogeneity does not manifest itself in the concrete moment of work .but in the synthesised objectification operated in the inertia of the product.

'This dequalifying transformation brought about by Taylorism is soon followed by a second moment: the specialised machine. To the extent that each operation becomes something mechanical, each machine can perform a single operation. .Specialisation passes from men to the machine, and the worker whom one rivets to his machine after an apprenticeship of a few weeks, sometimes a few days, knows his interchangeability. Finally, through automation, the single operations are inter-connected to become the task of a machine or of a complex of machines. Here human action is completely and totally absorbed and re-exteriorised through the passive instrument. However, the product does not change or hardly changes..To its consumer its inert unity reflects the creative power of human work. .In the product itself individual action, passive addition of common operations, production by specialised machines, and automation as a substitute for independent action become interchangeable. From our point of view this means that at any stage at all the original action of the organism', the action of the organic individual, the dialectic which constitutes, 'serves as a model for machines and for groups equally well. Always decomposable, always dequalified, it remains unsurpassable, and there exists no other constituting schema..And yet, in automation action changes into pure process and under Taylorisation into semi-passivity' (p.550-552).

10. Praxis-Process: The Organised Group as Institution.

Sartre has analysed Taylorism for two reasons - not only to show how under increasingly automated work processes human Action disappears as organic action, changes by degrees into pure process, that is, becomes determined in passivity, but also to draw out the significance and role of the action of an individual organism as the only model through which organised action becomes intelligible, that is, as its unsurpassable limit and in this sense as 'the fundamental condition of historical rationality' (p.643). In fact, if there were not this 'real homogeneity' between Common Action and Individual Action, if the structures of one were of an entirely different order from those of the other, it would be impossible for us to understand the action of groups and our own action within them. This does not mean, of course, that the action of groups is an 'organic synthesis' of some sort, but only 'that the group..fixes objectives with an individualised structure and cannot attain these except through common operations of an individual type' (p.509).

This is only another way of saying that organic individuality remains an indispensable moment of every common operation, even in the alienated field of the practico-inert. And this means that 'every individual, when he realises the mediation between the common individual (who has no real existence except in the organic life of the agent) and the object, only reaffirms his essentiality against the group'. For he is freedom, and without freedom there is no action, without action no work, without work there is nothing. (p.568).

Now when you think about it, in the Organised Group the individual is only a function, a power, a defined competence, and in relation to the common operation any given function has only a relative importance. 'Therefore the individual is inessential or only relatively essential' (p.568). And is it not also true that when you confronted that individual, when you attacked the positions of his Party, he was simply, for you and for himself, the abstract incarnation of his Party? You reduced this individual to something inessential, through him you went straight to -- his Party, to his 'only reality' (p.559). His personal characteristics scarcely mattered either for you or for him.

In the face of this definition, my essentiality, the knowledge that I have of myself as freedom, of that very moment through which I could submit consciously and freely to the Oath, to this limitation of my freedom, creates within the group -- each other third, each common individual, has this same knowledge -- a 'circular form of Seriality'. And this Seriality which evolves within the group is 'curiously enough not an alienation of Action in the practico-inert ..but a rediscovery of free individuality as the sole means and chief obstacle in the constitution of the Organised Group' (p.571). -Sartre grounds the birth of the Group as an Institution in this rebirth of Seriality founded on my awareness of my freedom, or on the awareness by each other third of his freedom. The Institution only reinforces and pushes to its maximum degree the definition of the group as pure essentiality, of the individual as its inessential means of survival (p.581). 'The institution has this contradictory character of being an Action and a Thing'. It possesses a 'considerable power of inertia', and affirms its essentiality through its very inertness (p.581). 'The institution is fundamentally unchangeable because within the institutionalised group my Action determines itself as incapable of changing it' (p.581). The sole means of communication within such a group is the serial form of communication of mass media (and in the first place, those newspapers which the Party calls its "organs") (p.582). Nothing I say here matters. If I repeat the dialectical experience, if, within this mass centralised party, I unite myself with others around some specific Action not determined in passivity, that is, as a mediation of the party's process, then this group which I now am as my action becomes through the chain of circular alterity a 'faction', a 'disruptive force' (p.582). The Institution's real power is founded on the serial powerlessness of its common individuals. 'We saw active passivity as a product governed by the inertia of the oath and as the very condition of common activity. And in the field of the practico-inert we became aware of passive activity as a product of alienation. One should now see the institution within the group in decline as the passage from one (active passivity) to the other (passive activity)' (p.583). The unity of the institutionalised group is the unity governed by Alterity, it is Serial Unification (p.584). Now finally, this Group/Institution is an Authoritarian Group. Authority as a group relation develops in its completed shape only at the level of the Institution, that is, through the rebirth of Seriality within an organised enterprise (Action). Authority finds its sole basis, dialectically speaking, within inertia, separation, serial otherness. (p.587) The whole structure of Coercion (of Terror) that defined the group from the moment of the Oath is here interiorised in the living Action (praxis) of one third. The quasi-sovereignty of each third, of the common individual, becomes the total sovereignty of this third (of Stalin) who re-interiorises the multiplicity of institutional relations to make them the synthetic unity of a real Action (p.587). If the Institution is the inorganic being-one of the serialised community, the Sovereign. 'represents the dissolution and synthetic reunification of this external passivity in the organic unity of regulative Action, ie, of the action of the group now returning to the group as the common action of one person' (p.587-88). All apparatuses of control and mediation within the (organised) group find their supreme mediator in this one person (p.591). 'The institutional group,

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a constituted reason, imitation of the dialectic, dialectic deviated by Seriality, seizes itself in the practical unity of the Sovereign as constituting reason' (p.596).

And yet the Institution is a Group, and the Group is Action. Thus in spite of the complete effacement of the translucidity of individual action, in spite of absolute sclerosis and ossification, in spite of the resurgence of seriality and of its powerlessness, in spite of the degradation of this group into a quasi-collective - this group, authoritarian, bureaucratised, hierarchical and totally centralised, is never completely assimilable to the practico-inert. Its meaning remains that of an Action, an active enterprise aimed at a certain objective (p.583).

11. THE STATE

It is now possible to move to a definition of terms that have so far remained absent - 'society', 'State', 'oppression' - and to return to the question of Classes. 'A Society is not a group, nor an ensemble of groups. Collectives form both the matrix of Groups and their graveyard. They nourish groups, sustain them and everywhere surpass them in their indefinite multiplicity. If the groups are multiple, the collective is their mediation or field of battle. Thus Society, approached very abstractly by dialectical experience at this stage of its development, manifests to us its most formal and indeterminate structure: within the material framework of needs, dangers, instruments and techniques, there can be Society only if there are, in one form or another, human multiplicities reunited by a container or by a soil, and only where these multiplicities are distributed into Groups and Series, and where the basic internal relation - whether one deals with Production (division of labour), or with Consumption (type of distribution) or with defence against enemies (distribution of tasks) - is the relation of Groups to Series' (p.608). Society is thus defined as the specific site of all the numerous relations of grouped multiplicities and serial multiplicities. As for the State and its specific intelligibility, 'this cannot in any case pass for the product or expression of the totality of individuals in Society, or even of their majority, since this majority is without exception serial. Thus the conception of a diffused, popular sovereignty incarnated in the sovereign (the State) is pure mystification. There is no diffused sovereignty: the organic individual is sovereign in the abstract solitude of Work; in fact, he is immediately alienated in the practico-inert where he learns the necessity of powerlessness (or powerlessness as necessity at the base of his practical freedom). At the level of the Series juridical and institutional power is completely denied to human multiplicities through the very structure of their relations of exteriority.' (p.609). These ensembles within Society 'have neither the power nor the quality to accept or to refuse the State. Far from sovereignty passing from the Collective to the Sovereign it is through the Sovereign that sovereignty moves downwards to modify the Collectives without transforming their structure of passivity. As for the Institution and the concrete power it exercises, we know that these are produced in the Group when it becomes institutionalised, and that it is an Action-Process that both ensures its effectiveness and imparts to a community which is serialising a certain type of unity. So in a given society the State is neither legitimate nor illegitimate: it is legitimate in the group since it is created in an environment of sworn faith'. The others, those not bound by this oath, do not challenge the legitimacy of the State, but that is only because, due to their powerlessness, 'they have no means of contesting or of establishing any kind of legitimacy. There is therefore a sort of acceptance, but it is in itself ineffective since it is in each Other only the consciousness of their common powerlessness. 'I obey because I cannot do anything else' (p.609). Serial impotence ascribes a serial pseudo-legitimacy to the State, to any State, whatever epoch of history one takes. The State is thus, in the first

instance a group that reshapes itself incessantly, and the source of its power as well as its limit is the powerlessness of the series as the flight of alterity (p.610).

Where, in a given society, there are classes, the State inserts itself in their struggles as the organ of the exploiting class or classes and forcibly maintains the status of the oppressed classes (p.610). Given that any class will be an ensemble of groups and series, this means that 'the formation of the State as permanent institution and as coercion exerted by one group over all serialities, can only be produced through a complex dialectic of groups and series within the dominant class. A revolutionary organisation can be sovereign. But the State constitutes itself as a mediation in the conflicts internal to the dominant class, so far as these conflicts threaten to weaken this class in front of the dominated classes. The State incarnates and realises the general interest of the dominant class beyond the antagonisms and conflicts of particular interests within it. That amounts to saying that the ruling class produces its State (that the struggles within the ruling class create the possibility as well as the necessity for one group to emerge to defend the general interest) and that its institutional structures will be defined through the given reality (that is, the mode of production and its relations)' (p.611). When Marx writes that it is the State that is sustained by bourgeois life, he is right, but only on condition that one adds that there is a circular process here and that 'the State, produced and sustained by the ruling class, constitutes itself as the organ of its tightening-up and its integration. Of course, this integration occurs in definite circumstances and as a historical totalisation. But it occurs through the State' (p.611).

However, this is not enough, for 'the State cannot take on its functions if it does not posit itself as mediator between the exploiting and the oppressed classes. The State is a determination of the ruling class and this determination is conditioned by the class struggle. But the State affirms itself as profound negation of the struggle of classes: its legitimacy, naturally, is something it derives from itself and the series can only accept it. And yet it is necessary that they do accept it, necessary that the State presents itself to the dominated classes as their security. It is absolutely impossible to ignore the fact that the regime of Louis XIV as much as that of Hitler... claimed to embody the legitimate interests of the entire people (or of the nation). So the State produces itself for the benefit of the dominant class but as active suppression of the class struggle within the national totalisation. The term 'mystification' is quite inappropriate to describe this new contradiction: in a certain sense, yes, there is mystification and the State maintains the established order; it intervenes in the class struggle to shift the balance in favour of the exploiting classes. But in another sense the State is really produced as something national; it takes a totalising view of the national ensemble; it sees further than the individual antagonists and can conceive a paternalist social policy which it then has to force on the dominant classes, in their interest, of course. Lenin said, when the relations of class forces tend to balance one another, the State is the arbiter. But this is only possible because the State has already posited itself for itself before the class from which it emanates.' (p.612).

'So, from our point of view, which is formal, and regardless of the concrete circumstances of its evolution in this or that historical society, the State belongs to the category of Sovereign-Institutionalised Groups; and if within this category of groups we distinguish between (i) those groups which work directly on a common inorganic object, (ii) those which are built to fight other groups and (iii) those whose objectification requires a manipulation of inert serialities, etc, it is obvious that the State belongs to this final subcategory. Born out of a certain type of Seriality (the dominant class) the State remains as heterogeneous in relation to it as in relation to the dominated class, for it constitutes its force on their powerlessness,

and reappropriates the power of others (ruling classes) over others (dominated classes), interiorising it and transforming it into law' (p.612). Finally, 'the real contradiction of the State is that it forms a class apparatus that pursues class objectives while at the very same time it posits itself for itself as the sovereign unity of all, that is, in this absolute Being-Other which is called the 'nation'' (p.613-614).

So Sartre attempts to construct, in outline, a theory of the State that can account both for its class determination and class functions, and for its real autonomy. One of the most striking aspects of this theory is its critique on the notion of popular sovereignty as the legitimising basis of the State. This critique proceeds not on the standard argument about the class determination of the State, but on the very conception of the State itself as a group that establishes its own legitimacy, which the serialities (of all classes in society, including the dominant class) are in no position either to accept or to contest. There is a kind of acceptance, Sartre argues, but it is the passive acceptance of powerlessness.

Sartre then examines the most pervasive type of action of the State-Group on the serialities that surround it. He calls this 'extero-conditioning'. Here the action of the Sovereign Group (State) consists in conditioning the masses through its manipulation of the rule of Alterity. 'Each Other has to be fascinated by a false semblance: the totalisation of alterities (that is, the totalisation of the series)' (p.615). Through the mediation of a controlled operation 'alterity...becomes the index of refraction of a unified social milieu whose law is that each of its practical characteristics is produced through the determination of each Other (in alterity through all the Others)' (p.614). From the perspective of serial individuality, extero-conditioning implies the illusory conception of its own being-other as fusion into the totalisation of a common field and the realisation of radical alterity through this illusion. 'Extero-conditioning', the manipulation and control of serialities through the action of the Sovereign Group, 'pushes alterity to its extreme, it compels the serial individual to act like the others so as to be the same as them' (p.620). This specific form of action on worked matter depends on serial forms of communication, the 'mass media' and works only because 'the serial individual is produced from childhood on in exteroconditioning' (p.621).

This conception enables us to distinguish serial forms of behaviour of a purely passive variety and controlled serial actions. Take the following example. We have seen how a practico-inert object (eg, gold, the universal machine) can produce its own idea (gold creates the idea that its accumulation is an expansion of wealth, the universal machine creates its own idea in the humanism of skilled work). To the extent that this inert object becomes the common-being-outside-self of a series, the idea which that object creates of itself becomes as such the unity of the series. 'It is in this way that Colonialism as a material system in the practico-inert field of colonisation, or, if you like, as the common interest of the colonisers produces its own idea in the course of its development...If Colonialism defines the oppressed masses of the colonies 'in terms of their essence (they are exploitable sub specie aeternitatis), this is because it cannot afford the least change in their condition without inviting destruction on itself. Colonialism defines the exploited masses as eternal', eternally exploitable, 'because it constitutes itself as the eternity of exploitation. To the degree that this inert sentence passed on the colonised masses becomes, in the form of an ideology, the Serial Unity of the colonisers, their relation of Alterity, it is the Idea as other or the Other as idea. So it remains an idea of stone, but its force derives from its absence everywhere (ubiquite d'absence). Under this form of alterity it becomes Racism. The peculiar characteristic of Racism is that one is not dealing in its case with a system of ideas which are false or malignant. Racism is in no sense a thought. Its very formulation is impossible. ...In reality, Racism is the colonial interest itself lived as a relation of all the colonisers of the colony through the

serial flight of alterity. In this specific case, the serial unity of the colonisers comes to them from the Absolute Other, who is the colonised, and produces a reflection of the colonised himself as an active group. The powerlessness of the series (of colonisers) constitutes itself as the magical power of the colonised. The racist idea as an idea that cannot even be put into thought and as categorical imperative may serve as an example typical of the Serial Idea as a behaviour governed in alterity, urgently realising the practico-inert unity of its ensemble and expressing this unity as a basic negation, ie, as powerlessness founded on separation' (p.344-47). - Thus Colonial Racism is a serial ideology. It is always the attitude of 'others'. On the other hand, this inert and passive seriality cannot by itself account for the active anti-semitism of the German petty-bourgeoisie in the 1920s. If in the colonies the living praxis of oppression is displaced to the armed forces of the State - we shall come to this - in Germany the oppression of Jews is diffused throughout a section of the population itself. Here Racism is the product of a systematic, exteroconditioning action of groups (eg, of the volkisch action groups) on series. This action is defined by reflexivity: the group creates racism in the series (the serialised petty-bourgeois masses of town and countryside) as something concretely visible, by directly or indirectly producing within the series practical signs of its hostility to Jews (p.622). The hatred of Jews is a hatred in each individual as a hatred felt by others. 'But totalising propaganda constitutes this hatred in exteroconditioning'. Alterity becomes the object of a 'ceremony'. 'The arrest or execution of a Jew on the government's orders passively realises in the masses this ceremony of alterity. Each act of violence becomes irreversible, not only because it implies a suppression of human lives, but because it makes each individual an exteroconditioned criminal, that is, one who accepts the crime of the leaders as something he has committed elsewhere, as an other' (p.622). The transcendent action of the group can then always reconvert this acceptance into pogroms, into the 'passive activity of controlled serialities' (p.623). This conscious control and manipulation of seriality and the induction of actions through such control is basically what differentiates the racism of the colonisers as a serial ideology, from the racism of the German petty-bourgeois masses as a serial mass movement. In serial mass movements organised or institutional groups induce from the serialised masses 'organic actions while preserving their unorganised status' (p.623).

12. The Working-Class As Praxis and Inertia, or as the Movement of their Mediation.

The status of Seriality defines classes in their dimension of being, that is, as Collectives. The action of groups on series is thus only a specification of the relation between classes, eg, between the organised or institutional groups of the ruling class and the unorganised, serialised masses of the dominated classes. Now this 'serial and practico-inert status', which is the class in its being, 'would not result in class struggle if each class did not contain the permanent possibility of dissolving seriality' (p.644). If seriality defines the field of the practico-inert, the historical production of groups determines a field of action of a new type which we can call the 'common field' (p.643). Exteroconditioning as a type of action of groups on series occurs within this common field, which is the field of the class struggle.

Let us return to the working class and try to recapture its reality at a more concrete level of integration. The question can now be posed as follows: what is the working class within the 'common field' determined as the space of interactions between groups and series and among groups? At any given historical moment, the working class is 'at the very same time a group with an institutionalised organisation, a group in fusion or under oath, and inert seriality..' (p.647). Or again, 'the class manifests itself simultaneously as institutional apparatus, as serial or organised ensemble of direct action groups and as collective with its status

defined in the practice-inert field (through its relations of production with other classes).. And these three simultaneous statuses are produced in a practical and dialectical relationship through a process that is itself conditioned by the entirety of the historical conjuncture' (p.649). In short, the working class (indeed, any class) is always defined by variable statuses and is irreducible to any one of these. It is the permanent temptation of a certain type of Marxist history to carry through precisely a reduction of this sort. 'The determinations of our language invariably present the class to us in a simplistic manner either as permanently united against capital or as temporarily demobilised' (p.649). But, if we are to have a concrete, ie, dialectically concrete, picture of the working class, or of any other class, then we have to say, 'the working class is neither pure combativity, nor pure passivity and dispersion, nor pure institutional apparatus. It is a complex and dynamic relation of all these practical forms each of which recapitulates the whole class and whose true relation is totalisation as a movement provoked by each form in the others and returning to each form through the others' (p.652). In particular this implies that class action never completely transcends or suspends class seriality. 'We know that seriality persists, perpetually eroded by the action groups that form at various levels in pursuit of different objectives' (p.644).

With this qualification, and within the threefold dialectical schema outlined (rudimentary group, institutional group, seriality) it is possible to define the Trade Unions specifically as typical expressions of those organised class groups that become institutional and sovereign within the class (p.644). As sovereign-institutional groups produced by the class itself, this sovereignty is the sovereignty of the working-class itself, but only as 'the abstract skeleton of the united class', that is, it is the sovereignty of the class when the class itself is complete seriality (p.647). So 'the Trade Union is the working class itself, objectified, exteriorised, institutionalised, sometimes bureaucratised, but unrecognisable in its own eyes and realising itself as a pure practical schema of unification. The Trade Union is the sovereignty of this class but torn away from it and producing itself elsewhere, in the pure milieu of a common action' (p.646-47). Through its very permanence the Trade Union represents practically the possibility of group-action for a class in seriality. 'This means that the work of the institutionalised third persons (trade union fulltimers) who form this apparatus is to preserve this possible unification as sovereignty and to create the local conditions, wherever possible, that allow such unification' (p.651). The fulltimer of a union is only 'the sovereign and abstract invitation to unity' (p.646), for the union is only the 'abstract skeleton', or pure schema, of the united class.

On the other hand, in contrast to this, the class group in fusion (the factory committee, the workers' council, etc) 'is the class itself in its suffering but above all the class in struggle. In it the suffering class transcends itself into a class unifying in struggle' (p.653). When the workers of an area, or of a town, unite in a common decision in periods of intensified struggle, the class really exists as practical totalisation. Now the appearance of such rudimentary (non-institutional) groups immediately results in bracketing the sovereignty of the Trade Unions, without ever reabsorbing them - and this is true even when such groups (totalisations) are 'formed' through the work done by trade-union fulltimers and even when they define their objectives in accordance with the line of the central (institutional) apparatus. The class group in fusion never reabsorbs the Trade Union (p.647), but it is this concrete group which through its very totalisation becomes the concrete sovereignty of the working-class, it is this group which exercises this sovereignty. Through it the concrete circumstances of the struggle, the relation of forces, etc, are defined rigorously and define the situation itself (as a relation of opposed sovereign groups incarnating antagonistic classes and

as a relation of these groups - State vs. councils - to their surrounding serialities) (p.648). The real effectiveness of these groups depends on the totalising action which they exert on the surrounding seriality. (p.648). When the groups themselves become serialised as groups (through the nature of their objectives, each determines the other as other), the Union Apparatus reassumes its importance and its coordinating and organising action tends to transform the isolated groups into organised sub-groups (of itself) (p.648). But in this situation that apparatus always remains an other-group and not internal sovereignty. In fact, in all such periods of struggle (of active totalisation into rudimentary groups) when the abstract sovereignty of the class in the form of its institutional apparatus (the unions) collides with the concrete sovereignty of the class as the action groups, 'a contradiction immediately results between the class as institutionalised and partly serialised sovereignty and the class as a living struggle-group that creates through its agitation free fraternal sovereignty. From the perspective of the institutional group, this struggle group will appear as a particular determination of the class (hence as limitation and finitude) to be governed by the sovereignty of the institution as a function of the general interests of the class itself' (p.655).

Viewed historically, that is, as a living entity, a class can then be defined as the circularity of a movement of mediation between its multiple statuses or practical forms. Each practical form (type of group, and series) is the mediation and totalising significance of the other forms, so that the 'unity' of a class (conceived no longer in a merely ontological dimension, but now as something that lives on the historical surface of society) comes to exist at all levels 'in the mediation itself. And this circularity of mediation is translatable both as circular simultaneity and as cyclical movement' (p.736). The dialectical intelligibility of history reaches its maximum degree of internal complication and concreteness (combination of all earlier

determinations) when this picture of the unity of a class as a movement of mediation between its statuses is reinserted into the common field and grasped in terms of the reciprocal totalisations of all classes in struggle. (Such a history has yet to be written.)

13. Oppression as Praxis (Action).

'The practico-inert can be studied as a process' Sartre writes, 'but this process, because it is already passive action, completely presupposes praxis (as a relation with the material field of action and with Others), which it reabsorbs and transforms into the object' (p.671). 'If the mode of production is in human history the infrastructure of every society, it is because Work - as a free concrete operation that becomes alienated ..- is the infrastructure of the practico-inert (and of the mode of production) not simply in the sense of a diachronic totalisation (ie, this machine ..is itself the product of labour) but synchronically, because all the contradictions of the practico-inert, in particular of the economic process, are necessarily constituted through the perpetual re-alienation of the worker in his work ..' (p.671).

There is another way of saying this. If the Class Struggle were merely a practico-inert structure, then the human order, the specifically human reality that emerges within nature, would be rigorously comparable to the molecular order, and Positivism would have to replace the Dialectic as the rationality of History. Take the example of French colonialism in Algeria. Here the proletarianisation and dissolution of the ancient rural communities created a vast reservoir of labour-power which was offered for sale to the colonial landowners. Here one might try to argue that 'the molecular constitution of the masses which formed the

material, inorganic and necessary condition of the process', of the practico-inert functioning, 'of over-exploitation, was given as an inert consequence of a rigorous determinism' (p.679). that the starvation wages paid to the wage-workers of Algeria was established by forces beyond the control of either of the two basic classes. 'In reality, this inertia, inorganic as it was, is created every minute of every hour through the petrified violence contained in the institutional presence of the Army. The internal consequences of this induced powerlessness of the masses (poverty, sickness, competition for work, rates of birth, etc), even if defined in seriality and determinations of the practico-inert field, were, taken as a whole, a governed process' (p.679). This means that the primordial violence of the conquest, of the enforced destruction of existing communities, 'is reabsorbed in the inert violence of this institution'. 'To the very degree that the institutional presence of a metropolitan Army is an action that provokes inorganic inertia among the masses, the colonised himself sees in this inertia both his own destiny and a praxis (action) of oppression by the enemy. Even when this individual interiorises his destiny in feelings of submissiveness.. he does not for one moment cease to resent this very condition, this very status of Being, as a ruthless and unforgivable violence inflicted on him by his enemy of stone..In his day-to-day life and actions this exploited man testifies to oppression through his very behaviour, exposes oppression not as an alienation but as pure and simple coercion exercised by some men over other men(p.679). Not only is this practico-inert process that one calls the 'colonial system' the product of past Actions - initiated by organised groups of capitalists and politicians in France - but the system has to be kept alive day after day through the institutional praxis of Armed Oppression, once the primordial Action has been dialectically surpassed in its inertia. - The murder and rape, the despoliation and torture of harijan workers is likewise a praxis of oppression that incessantly reanimates the 'objective' (practico-inert) process of over-exploitation. Here too violence is aimed at suppressing the organisation of the masses, that is, preserving their 'molecular constitution' as the material condition of over-exploitation. But here, apart from and beyond its mediation through the petrified violence of institutional presences - subgroups of the State - Oppression is the (common) Action of the basic type of organised groups within the landowning class. And because of this - because the praxis (Action) of Oppression must constantly reanimate the process (system) of exploitation, and because a class can only act through the groups which it creates, or inherits as structured ensembles, these organ-ised groups - the castes or subcastes - preserve their vitality, that is, they are unsurpassable as long as the class of landowners, representatives of the most parasitic forms of capital, have been unsurpassed. The landowning caste is the landowning class itself, but in the specific status of a practical totalisation (the class as an organised group). Without the castes the class of landowners would collapse into pure being, the inert status of a collective incapable of acting, and therefore of oppressing. (It can be shown elsewhere how in the machine this parasitic class sees both its short-term interest and its longterm destiny.)

In short, the economic and social 'phenomena' studied by a positivist history (the movement of demography, the economic conjunctures) 'have no intelligibility except in relation to a practico-inert process'. 'But this itself remains unintelligible if we do not begin by seeing in it the product of a human work that has forged it and that never ceases to control it' (p.683). Over-exploitation as a practico-inert process 'is nothing else but oppression as a historical action that realises itself, determines itself and controls itself in the milieu of passive activity' (p.684).

History, to be intelligible, must be Dialectical. A purely positivist history is incapable of comprehending any process,

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for the moment of freedom, of Work, of Action is then absorbed completely in the practico-inert (in 'systems', 'laws of motion', 'modes of production', etc, etc) and Class Struggle loses all meaning. Dialectical reason surpasses positivism in reabsorbing the inert, the World that man has created to create him, into Action, into man himself, as its active source, its truth, its sole animating reality and unsurpassable limit. Dialectical reason affirms the inseparability of 'exploitation' and 'oppression', of the practico-inert and conscious praxis. And this, finally, is what the State itself means. The State is this institutional praxis-process, but praxis nonetheless, of oppression by one class, internally serialised and only partially grouped, over another. All objectivism is in the final analysis false, because it sees in exploitation a passive result, whereas this result is incomprehensible, unless it is also the project, the conscious activity, of exploiting (p.687). The capitalist, it is true, is a personification of capital. But without the capitalist there would be no capital. This circularity is ultimately what defines the very framework of our history, of human history as we know it. And it is this circularity, between praxis and inertia, human action and human things, the individual and worked matter, in short, between man who makes history and the history which makes him, that finally shows us that this history, which is ours and which is the only one that we know, is something permeated by the finitude of the non-dialectical, something abortive and incomplete, and thus not really history at all, not really the pure dialectic of that lecturer, but something prior to a real history, which we shall have to call 'prehistory'.

I

The 18th session of the Punjab Khet Mazdoor Sabha (Punjab Agricultural Workers Association) was held on 23, 24 and 25 October, 1977 at Mukatsar (Faridkot district). 625 delegates from various districts, who were elected by one lakh twenty five thousand members of the Sabha participated in this meet. There were about 20 women delegates.

As per the 1971 Census there were around 0.8 million workers who reported themselves as 'agricultural labourers'. They formed around 32.11% of the total workers in agriculture and around 20.20% of all workers. The following table, included in the annual report presented by the secretary of the organisation, gives an idea of the organised strength of agricultural wage-workers in Punjab:

District	Members Recruited		No. of Villages		Village Committees	
	75/3	75/6	75/6	76/7	75/6	76/7
1. Faridkot	31,935	26,603	231	251	172	189
2. Amritsar	16,000	19,131	251	151	198	82
3. Ferozepur	13,500	14,567	151	-	48	-
4. Bhatinda	15,200	16,100	125	-	125	-
5. Jullundur	11,015	9,000	135	152	52	40
6. Hoshiarpur	6,500	7,000	121	98	61	54
7. Gurdaspur	2,016	8,449	105	-	75	-
8. Sangrur	6,100	8,033	95	65	47	34
9. Patiala	5,250	7,000	112	86	75	-
10. Roopnagar	4,735	6,008	98	60	56	50
11. Ludhiana	10,000	7,233	123	127	97	97

In the coming year the Sabha aims to increase its membership to 2 lakhs.

With the defeat of the Congress, and with Janata coming to power at the centre, significant attempts have been made by the CPI, the Congress and to a limited extent by the CP(M) to focus national politics on the question of atrocities on harijans. As the PKMS is the mass front of the CPI, the question of suppression of harijans (Nakabandis - social boycotts) formed the central theme of the deliberations. According to these parties, no doubt there were atrocities during the regime of Congress as well, but the landed sections had not at that time, prior to Janata's coming to power, acquired the absolute freedom they have today. A kind of 'Protective Umbrella' (though with a lot of holes in it) had been provided by Congress to its electoral mass-base. With the formation of the Akali-Janata Government, the Punjab harijans (the majority of them agricultural workers) feel that they have been rendered completely defenceless. Just after the elections the rich landowners cried with contempt and sarcasm: 'Your mother has died!'

Before we point out the specific nature of this 'protective umbrella', it should be made clear that as far as Punjab is concerned this meeting showed that the demand for higher wages lies at the heart of these conflicts. For the younger generation of Punjabis, untouchability is fast becoming a part of past history. Though there has been some increase in rural wages in Punjab during the 'green revolution', continuous price increases have neutralised even these small gains. Some important cases of struggle for higher wages in various districts of Punjab are listed below:

District	Villages	Wage-Increase	Comment
Hoshiarpur	Nadalon,	Rs.6 to Rs 7.25	<u>nakabandi</u> over wage-increas
	Bakapur,	Rs.5 to Rs.6+food	SDO and police intervention
	Naushera patan	Rs.4 to Rs.5	<u>nakabandi</u> for 9 days
Roopnagar	3 villages	demand for higher wages	<u>nakabandi</u>
Amritsar	Dhotian, Tur	attempted wage-cut from Rs.4 to Rs. 3	<u>nakabandi</u>
Patiala	4 villages	Rs.5.50 to Rs.6	<u>nakabandi</u> in 12 more villag
Sangrur	Shekhan	Rs.5 to Rs.7	<u>nakabandi</u> in 10 more villag
Ludhiana	Dango	attempted wage-cut from Rs.6 to Rs.5	<u>nakabandi</u> , unsuccessful
Jullundur	Mauli,	Rs.6 to Rs.8+food	strike of wage-workers and <u>nakabandi</u>
	Maheli	attempted wage-cut	by <u>nakabandi</u>
Faridkot	12 villages	at some villages wages crossed Rs.10	<u>nakabandi</u> in 10 village

During nakabandis the harijan bastis are treated like 'besieged fortresses'. No one in the bastis is allowed to go to the neighbouring fields for lavatory. In all the districts harijans carried on various forms of agitation, such as picketing, strikes, and demonstrations, to put forward their demands and protest against social oppression.

In the open discussion on the second day delegates from Ludhiana district refused to accept the view put forward by the secretary in the annual report, that under the Emergency it was difficult to attack the government and conduct militant mass movements. They argued that a Communist Party cannot expect favourable conditions for struggle from the very government which is the target of those struggles. In fact, the real test of a Communist Party is precisely its ability to carry on militant mass movements during a critical period. They also argued that forms of struggle such as picketing and demonstrations in front of police stations and tehsil authorities are no longer adequate as a means of defence against the many types of onslaughts launched on them during nakabandis. They proposed that Defence Squads of harijans should be created everywhere by the PKMS. This would make it possible to intervene whenever attacks are launched, or threats made, by the rich landowners. The leadership agreed to think over the question, but argued simultaneously that many other problems were bound to arise if such Squads were created. Moreover, the leader s argued, a decision to establish Squads would compel the party to intervene in the rural conflicts on a different terrain. Incidentally, Incidentally, Ludhiana not only gave a lead in the 'green revolution' but it is also today one of the two industrial towns of the province where a modern factory proletariat is becoming concentrated.

II

In the villages of Punjab today, the struggle for power within the landowning classes, among the various landed groups is manifest mainly in the Panchayat elections in which the harijan population plays a crucial role. The fixing of wages on a seasonal basis or a crop basis, the plots to be given to the harijans for houses, fines imposed, etc. are ultimately decided by the Panchayat after mobilising village opinion. The various groups of landed elites contesting for power are linked up with the upper hierarchy of the various political parties, basically to represent their own interests - commitment to ideology plays an extremely insignificant role. The degree to which a local boss can ensure control or influence over the local administration depends on the closeness of his links within the political hierarchy. These

'linkages' and the degree of support to a given local contact by these 'linkages' is in turn determined by the amount of electoral mass support this man can mobilise for his political supporters. The rich landowners tend to mobilise harijan votes through pure bribery - the offer of plots for houses, land pumps in bastis, street lighting, protection from police in minor offences and in some cases, straightforward gifts of wheat or cash.

It is only since the split in the Communist Party in 1964 that the CPI has turned its attention to the building of an electoral base among the harijans, the landless proletariat. Even today, in the Punjab, the CP(M) has almost no influence in the rural proletariat. As with the CPI and Congress, the politically dominant elements of this party, in the countryside, come from the smallholding peasantry and layers of the rich peasantry. Apart from the common base which they share, there is a certain overlapping of some local contacts of the CPI and the Congress in the villages. These overlapping contacts play a crucial role in seeking collaboration to secure the support of harijans in order to maintain their hold in the local institutions. In the clash of interests between agricultural workers and their exploiters these men have acted so far both as buffer and as mediators. They attempt to pacify conflicts through compromise, and in this way to contain the tensions and gain electoral support in local as well as assembly and national elections.

But since Janata's coming to power, the Congress no longer commands these power channels and is therefore no longer capable of bestowing 'concessions' of one type or another on the harijans. The right-wing opposition to such 'privileges' being conceded to harijans projected the Congress party in the image of a 'benefactor' of harijans. If the harijans wanted these concessions to continue and to be increased, they would have to support the Congress, they were told. This was at least the implicit understanding. However ineffectively, the Congress did attempt to reduce the day to day sufferings of the harijan masses, while the left promised heaven, but only in the future. With the defeat of Congress, the Punjab harijans felt they had been left in mid-stream, with nothing to rely on except their own strength. The landowners who form the village base of the Akalis and who have so far remained out of the local power institutions, because of harijan support to their political opponents, are today out to 'teach them a lesson'. They must 'discipline' the harijans before the latter are compelled to accept the 'new links' as mediators. The confidence and the illusions that Congress could create among the harijans, because of its own history and the role of Gandhism, has been shattered. It will be very long and perhaps never before the Janata can build a similar tradition of 'trust', and succeed in assuring the village proletariat that Janata needs them as much as the Congress did.

For the moment - today - the straitjacket into which the class struggle was forcibly pushed in rural Punjab, as a means by which parliamentary support could be mobilised, has collapsed. Before this struggle can become a source of parliamentary support again, a new one will have to be constructed. On the one hand, this crisis of faith in the bourgeois parties has already started a process of introspection among the harijans, while on the other hand they feel the need to turn to the existing left parties. In filling this vacuum, the CPI, in Punjab, is the natural heir to the harijan electoral mass-base previously with Congress. In this hour of crisis (rapid loss of Congress hegemony in the Punjab countryside), when the conflict between the exploiting and the exploited is no longer muffled and has now come out into the open, the CPI is trying to assure the harijans that it is the only political party left which can defend their interests. It is this tearing down of the camouflage that the CPI now sees as increasing atrocities.

As the CPI steps in to organise the agricultural workers on their manifold demands, higher wages the central one of these, its own organisational framework has started to feel the stresses and strains of this slow shift in the mass basis. The local secretary or the influential CPI man in the village who used to provide funds for conferences and elections, or provide his tractor to carry local demonstrators to the nearby town for rallies, is increasingly feeling isolated among his kinsmen and men of his class. In the local CPI Committee, when the representatives of the wage-workers emphasise the question of higher wages or of the intense exploitation of agricultural workers, he is reluctant to take a clearcut stand, for now he stands deserted by his Congress cousins through whom he had links in the State apparatus which enabled this block to play the role of mediator and to mobilise the electoral support base. After the elections, this role of mediation can only be played by a CPM 'link' of the sort described earlier, for the CPM stands closer to the Akalis (having secured 8 seats with their help). Without these mediations and the whole network, the vote in the elections will be a class vote that will put an end to the power-sharing game in parliament and legislative assemblies. Representatives in those institutions would then have to act in a manner that would strengthen the organisation and independence of the class. Any party receiving the votes of this class would be compelled sooner or later to evolve a strategy to overthrow the prevailing system. From this, one point becomes clear- participation in parliament is in itself neither useful nor harmful - the decisive thing here is the nature of the electoral support base and the way it is organised and mobilised.

The gradual shift in the mass base is giving rise to a dilemma which is bound to sharpen in the future and to precipitate conflicts between tendencies within the party itself. Given the parliamentary orientation and framework of the CPI, it will be interesting to see what tactics it evolves in confronting this dilemma.

(Jan.1978)

THE NEW WORKING CLASS AND NEW FORMS OF STRUGGLE IN PUNE.

A REPLY.

The article "The New Working class and New forms of struggles in Pune", published in the issue of bulletin of the communist platform contains some important factual mistakes. As an activist closely connected with Pune working class movement, I would like to put forward the real situation. I would also like to point out some methodological mistakes made by comrade A.

In discussing the 'emergence of new forms of struggle and political strike in the Pune working class' Com. A says, 'the period of emergency not only brought about political cohesiveness among industrialists, but forced the workers and the militants to rethink and evolve new tactics of struggle for self-defence. The formation of X committees or factory committees express such a spontaneous development! This is not true. These committees were not formed spontaneously i.e. without the intervention of communists. The Sarv Shramik Sanghatna activists in a discussion with some advanced workers first put forward an analysis of why bureaucracy emerges in ~~the~~ working class organisation and the methods of work and forms of organisation that can be helped to counter bureaucracy. The proposal of forming X committees was enthusiastically picked up by these workers. This proposal was then discussed amongst other workers and was then implemented. It is true that by putting forward this proposal the SSS activists were doing nothing but giving expression to the objective need of the worker's struggle and the class ~~instincts~~ instincts of the workers. But it is wrong to "forget" this moment of self-mediation, the intervention of the communist in this process.

Com. A tends to exaggerate the level of consciousness of the workers in Pune, and the development of class-struggle in Pune. Thus referring to the X-committees Com. A. talks about, "The generalisation of this form of organisation in the later period." But the fact is that such committees were not at all generalised except for some units in which SSS is in the leadership. Com. A is misreporting the 19th August strike when he says, "This prepared the basis for a general strike ~~and~~ encompassing not only industrial but all middle class organisation around Pune." The fact is that not a single white collar workers organisation (Com. A uses the unscientific commonsense term "middle class organisation") had given a call for a strike and the white collar workers were nowhere in the picture.

It is not true that there was "significant growth of the demand for Marxist literature, bulletins, etc." Such literature would be of tremendous help. But it is not as if some Marxist literature has been circulated and that the workers were asking for more of such literature. The sale of the weekly paper run by the CPI(ML) activists has been on the increase. Its sale has increased because a well organised group has been systematically increasing its circulation, and secondly because of its fiery language and the militant stand it takes on various questions. But its contents are hardly Marxist, and its growth hardly represents the demand for Marxist literature.

A meeting of the Pune Kangar Kruti Samiti was held on 22nd August to decide the further action after the successful strike of 19th August. Com. A says, "In this situation the proposal of the worker militant was in sharp opposition to those of the communist parties' leadership." But he either fails to understand ~~it~~ or neglect the role of the communists working in SSS in this meeting. The SSS was with the worker militants in opposition to the usual legalistic methods.

P.T.O.

Referring to the enhanced self activity of the workers in Pune area Com. A says, " The development of these initiatives on the part of the workers has not been given any attention by the political parties. " Here again he fails to mention the role of the SSS. The SSS has actively encouraged the self activity of the workers. This is evident from the fact that the X committees were formed almost exclusively in factories in which SSS was in leadership. The Kangar Sahayak Samities were formed almost exclusively in area in which the SSS was predominantly in leadership. This is not to suggest that these forms of organisation and methods of struggles were a creation of SSS activists, but that the SSS was instrumental in crystalising the new mood of the workers.

Com. A's account is defective in one more way. He merely says that X-committees are fundamentally different from the trade union managing committees, but he does not tell the readers as to what makes the Kangar Sahayak Samiti different from the usual united front of different trade ~~unions~~ unions. He does not provide any information about these organisations, on the basis of which a reader can draw his conclusions on the exact nature of these forms of organisations, their potentiality as well as their limitations as of to-day.

METHODOLOGICAL MISTAKES:

Why does Com. A makes the above-mentioned important mistakes relating to facts? Because he has certain conceptions of the working class movement and wants some how to tailor the reality into his scheme even if it means doing violence to facts. He has read in his books that in certain periods the working class spontaneously (i.e. without the assistance of the communists) ~~throw~~ throws up new forms of organisations. This he takes up as a dogma, and not as a starting view point of theoretical inquiry into a concrete situation. His dogmatic scheme makes it necessary for him to exaggerate the level of development of class struggle in Pune, and to denigrate the role of the communist intervention.

He "verifies" his theory in his analysis by disregarding the dominant facts. The real question is what are the spontaneous ~~o-~~ objective tendencies in the working class movement, and what should be the nature of intervention of the communists in relation to the various aspects of the working class movement. The Trade Union movement is an important aspect of the working class movement. Bureaucracy in the T.U.s is an important obstacle to the development of the working class movement in India. Under such conditions how should the communist intervene in the T.U. movement.?

It may be argued that because of the enhanced self activity of the working class, the working class will sweep away the bureaucracy and abolish the bureaucratic methods of functioning. In that case communist intervention in TU is not necessary. But that this is mere contemplative wishful thinking is amply shown even in Pune area, where workers have shown higher level of consciousness as compared to the other areas. One of the lessons of the recent upsurge in the W.C. movement in Pune is that the ~~com~~ communist must intervene in the T.U.s movements; help the W.C. to crystalise democratic forms of organisations and methods of work in order to throw away the yoke of bureaucracy. Even in case of Kangar Sahayak Samities which are a product of the strivings of the advanced layers of the W.C. for broader unity, the ~~bureaucratic~~ bureaucratic nature of other trade union organisations have become an obstacle in the way of these ~~s-~~sanities getting generalised.

P.T.O.

Revolutionary communist must intervene to enhance this process of solidarity. (It must be pointed out that though these area committees have revolutionary potential in the sense that they can become centres of working class power, at the moment they are still within the bounds of TM movement.)

Lastly a word about Com. H's economistic conception of history. How does he explain the heightened self activity of the working class in Pune ? "The intensification of labour in engineering and other industries proceeds through fusing the workers with inhuman machines, controlling the expenditure of labour time through time and motion studies, curtailing free movement in factories, etc. The pressure for intensification is far greater since it occurs in technological conditions which are more backward than average international one. These circumstances account for the nature of recent struggles." (Pl2) The "new industrial structure" and intensification of labour process forms only a backdrop of the recent struggles in Pune. The specificity of the recent struggle, the enhanced self activity, heightened class consciousness of the workers cannot be explained on this basis.

It can only explain the militancy of the workers in Pune. But militancy has been a feature of the working class struggle right from the late sixties, since intensification of labour process necessitated by competitions with international Capital has been there for last ten years. What explains the nature of the recent struggles is the history of class struggle in Pune. The workers in Pune have seen the consequences of depending upon leaders for the fulfilment of their demands. They blindly followed one leader after another, but in vain. The emergency taught them many lessons. The methods of work had to change, the workers had to take more initiatives, had to reflect upon their organisations and struggles. Coupled with this was the change in the SSS. Unlike other TU,s in Pune, the Pune unit of SSS went through a process of rethinking and some conscious changes were made in the methods of work. All these factors explain the advance made by the working class in Pune.

To directly derive the nature of the recent struggle from the "new" industrial structure" and intensification of labour process betrays an economistic conception of history.

BY SURESH.

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PIECERATE AND INCENTIVES - THE GOLDEN CAGE OF CAPITALISM

by R.N., (Pune) (Transl. from Marathi)

What Wage do the Capitalists Pay us?

A capitalist always pretends that his profits are low, that he runs his factories to feed and clothe workers. His emphasis on the export of commodities he explains by his concern to avoid unemployment. But the capitalist gives no more importance to workers than he gives to machinery or raw materials. Just as he buys machinery and raw materials before starting production, he buys the workers' labour-power. The wages a worker receives represents the price of his labour-power. How is the price of labour-power determined? As the amount necessary for the subsistence of the worker and of his family. A capitalist does not wish to pay more than this. Where wages are just sufficient to cover subsistence, workers are compelled to turn up for work every day, to sell their labour-power to the capitalist and become his permanent wage-slaves. If a worker were to receive wages well in excess of his actual subsistence needs, he would use his 'savings' as funds for struggles, or he might start an independent business and escape from the grip of wage-slavery.

From Where do Capitalists Obtain their Profits?

In a capitalist society, all use-values take the form of commodities. A capitalist does not produce goods for his own use. He aims to sell the goods he produces so as to make as much profit as possible. Profit is his God. His thirst for profits is insatiable. In a capitalist society everything turns on the market. Almost the entire output is sold and all goods required for reproduction are procured through exchange. The capitalists have given all products the character of commodities. Not only the necessities of life but even human qualities like beauty, etc. have become commodities. Capitalists buy the inventions of scientists and transform these scientists into their salaried employees. Great thinkers, teachers, lawyers, scientists - all become salaried employees of capital.

Capitalist society is divided from top to bottom into two classes. These two classes are: the capitalist class and the working class. The capitalists are persons who have brought all means of production into their own control; the sarvchara workers (those who have no means of subsistence of their own) are persons whose means of production (land, skills, workshops, etc) have been seized from them. The capitalists themselves do not take part in production. As workers possess no means of production of their own, they have no choice but to sell to the capitalist their capacity for work, i.e., their labour-power. As the wages they get are just sufficient to cover their basic needs, workers are compelled to sell their labour-power to the capitalist day after day. A worker is not tied to any particular capitalist. He can leave his job at any time. But as he possesses no means of production of his own, he must sell his labour-power to one or other capitalist - otherwise he will starve. So even though the worker is not a slave of any particular capitalist, he remains a slave of the capitalist class as a whole. In appearance all citizens are equal before the law, but in reality a worker is a wage-slave of the capitalist class. Like all other commodities, labour-power is a commodity bought by capitalists.

It is now possible to understand the secret of the worker's exploitation and capitalists' profits. Let us assume that the capitalist pays a worker Rs.10 for the use of 8 hours of his labour-power. Our worker reaches the factory and starts work. With the help of a machine he works on raw materials and makes a new product and creates new value in the form of the finished product. If during the first hour of work he produced commodities to the value of Rs.10, he cannot say, "I've produced commodities equal to the value of my wage, so I might as well pack up and go home". He must work the full 8 hours! During this time he produces commodities to the value of Rs.80. Of this the capitalist claims Rs.70 as his own. This is his profit. Capitalists make profits by seizing the surplus-labour of workers.

The management of SKF proudly struts about, boasting of the large salaries paid by it to its employees, about the substantial concessions given to them, and so on. It may be true that the wages of SKF workers are higher than those of workers in other companies. But SKF workers face much higher rates of exploitation than other workers. Within the first ten to fifteen minutes of an 8-hour working-day the SKF worker produces enough to pay for his wages. Production during the rest of the working-day belongs to the company!

Piece-rates and Incentives as forms of the same type of exploitation

Do piece-rates and incentives make any difference? Management claims that both sides benefit, workers as well as management, that greater production makes higher wages possible, and that workers receive the full value of additional work, that there is no exploitation here. This is sheer deceit. The wages of SKF workers have barely increased over the last ten years, whereas production has increased several times over. While the company's profits have multiplied, workers' wages remain at the level of necessary subsistence. So the capitalists play a trick. It is not possible to find a single instance where there has been any substantial improvement in conditions of workers as a result of the piece-rate or incentives systems, anywhere in the world. In short, piece-rates and incentives are mirages - they beckon the workers continuously but workers remain where they are.

Secondly, under the piece-rate system, workers obtain wages in proportion to output. Consequently, the need to supervise production is substantially reduced, and the company cuts its costs while production continues to increase spontaneously. As piece-rates are payable only so long as a certain quality is maintained, quality-control is also realised automatically. This is why in SKF the management does not promote experienced workers to the grade of supervisor. Thirdly, since the output is measured daily, it is possible to measure the work-speed of every worker. This speed increases continuously. In short, speed of work and quality of output are automatically controlled under the piece-rate and incentives systems. The functions of the capitalist are rendered superfluous - what more do the capitalists want! Fourthly, under these systems the worker willingly intensifies the expenditure of his labour-power. It becomes easy for the capitalist to increase the intensity of work. The worker willingly undertakes maximum overtime work. But the workers come to realise that their wages remain constant or increase only slightly however hard they work. The reason is that overtime is a trap set by the capitalists. They pretend to pay more wages through overtime, but instead they greatly increase production and make use of various tricks to cut wages. Ultimately, the workers get only just enough to meet their subsistence needs. Such fantastic magic even K. Lal is incapable of! But the capitalists perform it with ease.

In a place where the union is strong and the workers are united, it is difficult for the capitalist to cut wages. In such places, they do not preach the virtues of piece-rate and incentive schemes; instead they discontinue such schemes and begin to pay time-wages. There have been many such examples throughout the world. In short, piece-rate and incentive schemes conceal the exploitation of the workers and intensify it.

The Case of TISCO at Jamshedpur

Take the example of Tata's TISCO located at Jamshedpur. There adivasi workers work on the blast furnace. To begin with, their needs were few because of their backwardness and rural background. Therefore they could save money from their wages. They would take leave after pay day and refuse overtime. So what did management do about it? It started a liquor shop, gambling dens, etc. in the workers' bastis. Furthermore, it

started advertising luxury goods (transistor radios, fans, terene clothes, cupboards, furniture, etc.) The Company opened shops selling these goods. In this manner, it artificially inflated the needs of the workers. Then an incentive scheme was introduced, and production expanded rapidly. This 'mai-bap' company later started a consumer society for the benefit (!) of the workers. Naturally the company's contribution to this society was small. Workers were asked to buy shares. Loans were advanced to workers out of these funds. Repayments of loan instalments resulted in reductions of take-home pay. Consequently there was a reduction in the leave applied for and taken. Workers began working overtime. As the Company flourished, the condition of the workers deteriorated.

Who advised the Company to play these tricks? Two American imperialist consultants were brought to India specially for this purpose. After studying the situation for a considerable period, they gave this advice to the company. Thus the trap was laid and the prey (the workers) caught.

How Piece-Rates are Beneficial to the Capitalists

Where wages are being paid on a time basis and the company wants to introduce a piece-rate or incentive scheme, the management promises to share the additional profits equally with the workers, i.e. it claims that wages would increase to the same extent as profits. In order to understand the managements' calculations, we must peep into the account books kept by these wolves.

Let us assume that on a time basis a worker receives two rupees per hour, and every hour an operator completes 100 jobs. Let us further assume that on introduction of the piece-rate scheme, wages increase by 25% and production increases by 100%. Now the hourly wage would be two rupees and fifty paise instead of two rupees, and hourly production would rise from 100 jobs to 200 jobs. Previously a worker had to complete 100 jobs for two rupees, so he was paid two paise per job. Now he completes 200 jobs for Rs 2.50 so that the rate per job is 1.25 paise. So production has doubled from 100 jobs to 200 jobs, but the wage-rate has declined from two paise per job to 1.25 paise per job. The company has saved 75 paise (2paise-1.25paise) per job. Previously workers received 2 paise for 100 jobs. Now they receive 1.25 paise for 200 jobs. 0.75 paise per job is saved. Here the company may claim that its other costs have increased due to the implementation of the piece-rate system. So let us assume that the increased expense is 20% of the money saved. Then the management's final saving is 0.60 paise per job. Previously a worker had earned 2 p. per job; after introduction of the piece-rate management had to pay 0.60 p less per job, net of all additional expenditure. So cost-reduction per job comes to 30%. ...

Sleight of Hand in Time-and-Motion Study

So far we have assumed that the company runs its affairs as Raja Harishchandra did - with honesty - and that inspite of this it obtains a saving of 30%. But the real sleight of hand still remains: this is called Time & Motion Study.

If a day's wages is to be paid to workers under a piece-rate/incentives scheme, then it is necessary to compute his output per day. Similarly, the piece-rate per job must be fixed. For this purpose a study is undertaken to find out how many jobs can be performed within a given time. The rate is established on this basis. The greater the number of jobs in a given period, the smaller the piece-rate, and vice versa. Every job and machine rate is fixed by studying the existing production and daily wage and taking those as the basis. If the machinery is improved, the rate may be changed. This is called Time and Motion Study.

There are many methods by which 'Time and Motion Study' can be conducted. Of these the 'Stop watch study method' is the most common. A complete operation on a particular machine is selected for the purpose of 'stop watch study'. A management representative, with a stop watch in hand, completes the study

in the following steps:

First, he makes a close observation of the manner in which the worker performs the various operations over the machine. He makes changes in the operations to reduce working-time. Usually he suggests changes that imply greater intensity of work for the worker. It is impossible for workers to work at this intensity continuously for 8 hours. Later, he breaks up the whole operation into various parts and measures the time taken for each part separately. After this he should add up the time required for each part and compute the total time required for the operation as a whole; then, taking into account the no. of jobs produced during this time, calculate the time required for each job. But he does not do this. He first 'levels' the time taken for each part of the operation. This is also called 'rating'. What does 'levelling' or 'rating' mean? If a worker has taken one minute to complete a part of the operation, and our angel holding the stop-watch is of the opinion that the worker has taken excess time and that that part of the operation should have been completed in half a minute, this is noted down. The time recorded by the study-man is called 'normal' or 'standard' time. Ultimately, it is not the actual time recorded for each part of the operation, but this 'standard' time which is added up to compute the time taken for the operation as a whole. This then forms the basis for computing the time required for each job. And finally, how is the 'standard' time itself determined? The time that suits the fancy of the boss sitting in the office is called 'standard time' ! (After all, he is an 'expert' !)

After that, 'allowances' are computed. There are three types of allowances. Firstly, personal allowances which account for time necessary to meet personal needs during working-hours. Secondly, allowance for physical and mental fatigue resulting from continuous work, and thirdly, allowance for time which is inevitably taken during the work for bringing tools, etc. The magnitude of these allowances also depends basically on the fancies of the boss.

Later standard time is computed and the piece-rate is fixed. It is clear from this that 'stop-watch study' is nothing but make-believe designed to dupe the workers. Real piece-rates are determined in the office alone.

Let us take an illustration to see how the 'standard time' is measured. Let us suppose that our operation consists in drilling the metal plate by making use of the single-spindle drillpress. It is broken into the following suboperations:

- (i) holding the job, clamping the job and fixing it at a proper place,
- (ii) fixing from below the spindle on the job
- (iii) drilling the hole with drilling machine,
- (iv) releasing the job and keeping it in the pane.

Once the operation is broken up in this way, the time taken for each suboperation is measured, as follows:

<u>Suboperation</u>	<u>Time (actual in minutes)</u>	<u>Standard time (mins.)</u>
(i)	0.6	0.4
(ii)	0.2	0.1
(iii)	0.6	0.2
(iv)	0.5	0.6
	<u>1.9</u>	<u>1.3</u>

The actual time taken adds up to 1.9 minutes, while the standard time adds up to 1.3 minutes. After this, allowances are computed and the standard piece determined.

Analytic Estimate and ratio/desk study are some other methods. They are much more complicated than the stop-watch study method, and more beneficial to the management. A manager has described time and motion study as "secret computation". He says that "from the worker's standpoint time-study method is a mystery which he cannot solve. The man handling the watch is a management man". In so-called 'levelling' this man determines the 'normal speed of work of the worker'. That is,

he substitutes 'standard time' for actual time recorded. During all this work, he completely flouts scientific methods. (eg, previously one SKF manager had computed standard time. He left his job later. His successor claimed that his predecessor's computation was wrong, and criticised him. Now that this man has also left the company, the present boss says that both previous managers lacked brains and that the whole method was incorrect. From this example, SKF workers can easily understand the point.)

Another manager has written that the 'stop-watch' method is not a scientific method since it depends on the person performing the time-study. This man arbitrarily decides the standard time. The method 'is as much an art as a science'. (Here, the writer hesitates to tell the whole truth. Actually he wants to say that time-study is a pure 'art', and there is nothing scientific about it.)

Though management pretends that time & motion study is a great mystery to the mass of workers, class-conscious workers know full well that it is a tactic used by capitalists to increase the rate of exploitation and at the same time to conceal the fact that it is exploitation. But this balloon bursts as soon as you touch it.

Techniques of Rate Cutting.

When introducing the incentive scheme, the capitalist promises workers that wages will increase in proportion to increases in production. But while production increases, the capitalist reduces the piece-rate. To retain their previous level of earnings, the workers are forced to increase production. By way of enforcing production-increases, management either introduces various improvements or integrates 2,3 or even 5 machines and compels a single worker to run all of them. After production has increased, the time-study is again undertaken and the piece-rate reduced to such an extent that even when production may have increased several times over, the worker still receives the same hourly wage that he received previously. For example, the management of the Textile Bearings Division of SKF ascribed increased output not to the extra work done by workers but to its own 'skill'.

Results of Incentive Schemes for Workers.

(Hereafter I shall refer only to 'incentives' as the piece-rate is only a special type of incentive scheme.) Unemployment naturally results from the enforcement of incentive schemes. Lay-offs become inevitable. According to one working-class leader, "Our company follows the piece-rate system. Management made some changes in a machine in a particular dept. and resorted to speed-up of work. Following that, every year hundreds of workers were laid off for three months. This continued for five years".

There are different types of incentive schemes. Simple piece-rate is one of these. This is the type currently enforced in SKF. There is another type in which the company guarantees a minimum wage to the workers. The workers receive this wage as a right, regardless of fluctuations in output. On the other hand, this right indirectly imposes a responsibility on workers to produce whatever is considered as minimum production.

Under another important form of incentive, the basic wage is fixed, as is standard production. Workers who produce in excess of the latter receive an incentive. But who is to decide the standard production? The company regards the production of the fastest operator as standard production; on the other hand, workers claim that the production of the maximum number of workers should count as 'standard'. To take an example: Suppose there are 100 operators in a shop. Suppose the output produced by them is as follows:

<u>No. of Operators</u>	<u>No. of Jobs Produced</u>
10 operators	2000
70 " "	1000
20 " "	900

The workers demand that the standard production should be 1000 jobs. From the management's standpoint the standard production is 2000 jobs. Ten operators already producing 2000 jobs stand to gain. Suppose of the remaining ninety operators, 30 succeed in increasing their production beyond 2000, they will get incentives. On the other hand, even if the remaining 60 operators were to increase their production, the most they would receive is the basic wage. Incentives are a tuft of green grass that the horse runs after without ever catching!

Incentives as a Form of Exploitation of Labour-power.

The Company attempts to impose army discipline on the workers by pressurising them to increase production. To the company the machine and the worker are no different. Each minute is taken into account, and the drive for increased production transforms the worker's human body into a machine. When machinery breaks down, capital brings it back into use through repairs. But if the human machine turns out to be defective, capital casts it aside as permanently useless.

Incentive schemes intensify the rate of exploitation. Our labour-power is literally 'milked dry'. It is torn away from us. One dare not move away from the machine, not even to take a drink of water, to have a cup of tea or to go to the toilet. We find ourselves in a totally wretched condition. We are so completely absorbed in work, without break for eight hours, that we are like blinkered bullocks incessantly running around an oil crusher. We are forced to work up to the last minute. In this way, the piece-rate system binds us hand and foot to the machine and compels us to expend our labour-power at an increasing rate.

Incentives (Piece-rate) Results in Rivalry Among Workers.

During a stretch of 24 hours, each machine is attended to by three operators. Each of them is so obsessed with completing his 'quota' that he does not pay attention even to simple tool changing. He finishes his work, completing his quota, and leaves the operator on the next shift to change tools. And the operator of every shift behaves in exactly the same way. As a result the workers are divided among themselves, and this helps the management.

We find that in SKF we have an advanced system of slavery. If the machine is stopped for any reason, eg, for repairs, for want of materials or power, for resetting for inspection, the worker is paid 75% of his average wage for the time lost in this manner. The fault does not lie with the worker; the company's lack of planning is at fault. Still the worker is burdened with a loss of 25% of his wage.

The wages paid to the worker are proportional to his output. This is the principle underlying wage payment. This results in competition among operators of the same grade. Operators start gossiping, they begin petty squabbles among themselves, since the rate varies for different types of operators. A division is created among operators working on the same machine. Since departments like the tool room, maintenance, electrician, etc, are paid on a time-basis, there develops an antagonism between the workers of these departments and the workers on piece-rate. In this way, multiple divisions emerge within the work force.

Older workers receive lower wages than new workers. The efficiency of these older workers diminishes, since the company has extracted so much of their blood over the years. For this they should really receive seniority allowance. On the other hand, the younger workers must realise that even though they get higher wages today, their condition is going to be no different from that of these older workers.

If the tools of a new setting machine are burnt, the operator is compelled to change them without waiting for the setter, otherwise production will diminish. The operator is not paid anything for doing the work of a setter.

The management intensifies such divisions within the ranks of workers by bringing pressure to bear in different ways, now by false promises, now by threats. It sets one worker against another. It creates chenchas among workers. And what importance does management give to such chenchas when their work is over? It casts them aside. The management plays its usual game. It knows how to look after its own interest.

The class-conscious workers are fully aware of such tactics. They have closed their ranks to stand united against their enemy bent on reducing them to such wretched conditions.

Re workers on time-rate. Such workers are paid a specific wage. Still, wherever possible, a time-study is conducted of all the operations concerned. In this again the management resorts to deceit and fraud. There is a continuous pressure on workers to increase their production. The company is at the moment thinking of retrenching workers in the Tool Room Dept. It is conspiring to get the work done from outside the factory. To some extent the work of this dept. has already been contracted out.

Diseases and Accidents.

The incidence of illness among the workers of the company is high. Per shift at least 20% of the workers are absent due to illness. The proportion of illness cases is even higher in the Grinding Dept. The management has no interest in providing for proper ventilation, consequently the workers contract diseases of the lungs, chest and stomach due to grinding dust, smoke and gases in the dept. The rate of accidents increases due to the terrifying pressure of work under piece-rate. In SKF several workers have died in the last ten years, eg, Erappa. Many have lost fingers or toes. Some have become unfit for work. What concern has the company shown for such workers? The management threw them out, just as one throws out the bagasse after crushing the sugarcane juice!

Categories of Workers.

Casual workers: Of the workers in SKF 20% are casual. As minimum wages they manage to get about Rs 8/- per day. As the company is not happy with this, it gives out many jobs, eg, cleaning the shopfloor, canteen, garden, etc, on a contract basis. The company should really employ such workers on its own account. A portion of the wretched wages earned by these workers is swallowed up by the contractors.

Junior engineers: They find themselves in a peculiar situation. From above they are under constant management pressure to keep watch over the workers to make sure that the job is done. The knowledge of engineering that these poor chaps obtain after many years of hard training turns out to be quite useless. It becomes their function to act as vakeels for the company, to keep a police watch over workers and to blow up workers, although they know the worker's situation. They must realise that their interest lies in uniting with the workers and in ceasing to be sycephants of the management.

Apprentices: They are in the age-group 16 to 20. In a capitalist society they cannot obtain any high level of education. They take up apprenticeship for 3 to 4 years since they realise that despite their education they will face unemployment. By classifying them as 'trainees', a lot of work is imposed on them. On the conclusion of the training course, management does not abide by the commitment to absorb them in the same factory and throws them out. Outside there are numerous unemployed young technicians whose ranks are swelled by these apprentices. They should seriously reflect on the present social system. They should ask: why are they unemployed? In the large-scale factories one worker is required to run 2, 3 or 5 machines. If this were stopped, many of these young elements would get work. The root cause of their unemployment lies in the capitalist character of society. They must become conscious of the need to participate actively in the workers' movement, to guide workers' struggles against capitalism and to bring about socialism. They should not be taken in by false promises.

HENRYK GROSSMANN: THE VALUE-PRICE TRANSFORMATION IN MARX AND THE
PROBLEM OF CRISES (Part Two)

(Part One of this essay appeared in HCP No. 1, October 1977. In this Grossmann argued that Marx's analysis in *Capital* proceeds in a circle, taking as its point of departure concrete appearances, penetrating to their underlying hidden essence, and returning to the concrete appearances whose law of variation can now be grasped; that within Marx's investigation, the Reproduction Diagrams have a purely theoretical character since they comprise only values, surplus values and individual rates of profit and rest on the assumption that commodities exchange at value, and hence *prima facie* stand in contradiction to reality; and that therefore an understanding of the concrete trajectory of capitalist production requires categories not comprised in the diagrams - prices of production, profit and its individualised forms, the general average rate of profit - which must be derived from the value categories through the construction of intermediate links.)

IV The Value Schema as a Historical and Theoretical Point of Departure

Once we ascribe the role of regulator and driving force of capitalist production to the empirically given categories of Price of Production, Average Profit and General rate of Profit, the question arises - in that case what function do we ascribe to Values? Isn't a Reproduction Schema based on Values meaningless when it fails to provide an adequate picture of capitalist commodity production and when it possesses no immediate descriptive value? The question is a false one. Despite the reality of prices of production, Values continue to hold a central significance for capitalism, and that in a double sense, as Marx emphasises -

1. They are the historically prior form, valid for the epoch of simple, i.e. precapitalist, commodity production founded on self-supporting producers (artisans, peasants) - 'so long as the means of production employed in a given branch of production can be transferred from one sphere to another only with difficulty' (Cap.3. p.174), that is, so long as legal or factual obstacles stand in the way of the movements of capital and thus impede the formation of a general rate of profit. Only in this period of simple commodity production is the exchange of commodities at market-values not a purely theoretical assumption, but a factual process in the sense that values form the centre of gravity around which market-prices fluctuate. (Cap. 3 p.175)

2. In contrast, within the limits of capitalist commodity production the earlier function of Values in exchange is modified: commodities now exchange at prices of production that differ from values quantitatively, from which it follows that Values now function merely as theoretically prior forms for the derivation of prices of production. Prices of production are the regulators of the extent of production under capitalism; they are decisive for the movements of capital, i.e. for the constant flow and withdrawal of capital within the individual spheres of production, thus decisive for the division of the total social capital, and thus they and not values determine the proportionality or disproportionality that characterises this division. However, whereas bourgeois economy simply accepted prices of production at face value, without any further effort to establish their origin, Marx showed that the prices of production must themselves be derived from values, that without this derivation 'the general rate of profit (and therefore the price of production of a commodity) remains a vague and senseless conception.' (Cap. 3 p.155) To be able to speak of an average profit, we must know the components that enter into the formation of the average. 'Without this the average profit is average of nothing, a mere delusion. Only in this sense does the law of value regulate the movement of commodity-prices under capitalism.' (Cap.3 p.) This does not preclude the fact that in the individual spheres of production not values but prices of production form the centre around which the daily fluctuations of market-prices occur and 'tend to equalise one another within definite periods' (Cap.3 p.176); that moreover prices of production and not values govern the extent of production

and the distribution of capital and play a determining role vis-a-vis moments that are of utmost importance to an understanding of crises insofar as these are traced back to disproportions in the distribution of capital. (cf. Cap.3 p.860 'The entire process of capitalist production is regulated by the prices of the products. But the regulating prices of production are themselves in turn regulated by the equalisation of the rate of profit and its corresponding distribution of capital among the various spheres of social production. Thus profit here appears as the chief factor, not of the distribution of products, but of their production itself.')

So we see that the sale of commodities at their value has no relevance to capitalism as it really functions. 'The exchange of commodities at their values,' writes Marx, '...requires a much lower stage than their exchange at prices of production, for which a definite level of capitalist development is necessary.' (Cap.3 p.174) Capital succeeds in equalising the different rates of profit of the individual spheres (and thus in forming prices of production) 'to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the extent of capitalist development in a given national society.' (Cap.3 p.192)

From the analysis presented above it follows that the arguments of R. Luxemburg and her followers and likewise those of Hilferding and Otto Bauer are doomed to fail from the very start because they undertake to demonstrate (or refute) the crisis-ridden character of capitalism on the basis of a schema that knows only the sale of commodities at their values and thus expresses, according to Marx, only a 'lower stage' of development, viz. precapitalist commodity production. Thus they simply ignore the schema of prices of production appropriate to developed capitalism and all those moments, like prices of production and the average profit, that are decisive for the proportional (or disproportional) distribution of capital under developed capitalism. The real categories that regulate the entire mechanism are passed over in silence by them while they remain preoccupied with categories that are unreal (different rates of profit) and that 'could not exist without abolishing the entire system of capitalist production.' (Cap.3 p.151)

The defects of this method are plain to see. To eliminate the contradiction described earlier between the Theory of Value and the 'factual appearances of production', between the Value Schema and capitalist reality, the analysis of the capitalist/reproduction process has to move beyond the Value Schema with its different rates of profit, it has to regard the Schema as in fact only a 'theoretically prior' stage. That is to say, we would then have to take the Theory of Value and the Value Schema merely as an analytic point of departure from which to start in our effort to find, with the help of a series of mediating links, the routes that lead into the factual appearances, i.e., to prices of production and the general rate of profit. In short, the Value Schema has to be transformed into a schema of Prices of Production through a graded and step-by-step approximation. 'It is evident that the emergence, realisation, creation of the general rate of profit necessitates the transformation of values into prices of production that are different from these values.' (T.S.V. p.434)

Marx begins his analysis of the crisis-problem, it is true, in Vol.2 with a value schema. But his arguments neither is nor can be definitive, since it is located at a level of abstraction entirely removed from and initially in conflict with reality. The argument has a purely provisional character and is completed only in Vol.3, with the theory of the transformation of values into prices of production. In Marx's analysis the Value Schema forms only the cell form, the first stage of a process of approximation, still to mature through a series of metamorphoses into the price-form.

The Marxian Value Schema confined its analysis purely to the creation of value and surplus value as a whole, i.e., to the form in which they emerge out of the process of production, where he abstracts from competition and from the influence exerted by the sphere of circulation on the distribution of surplus value. However, the analysis had to continue by taking into account the

elements excluded from the Schema, so that the investigation into the creation of surplus value in the process of production had to be completed by an investigation into the subsequent process of its division within the sphere of circulation, through the mechanisms of competition.

All this induces the following conclusion regarding the problem of crisis, insofar as this concerns the relations of mutual dependence and proportionality of the individual spheres of production. (A conclusion that likewise indicates the method of investigation to be followed.) To be convincing, the analysis of the crisis-ridden nature of capitalism cannot possibly restrict itself to the Value Schema, which forms only a first stage in the process of approximation. Rather, such an analysis must follow for all the stages therein and it must be validated on the basis of a Price of Production Schema.

V The Problem of Crisis and the Theories of Volume 3 of Capital

The programme of investigation formulated here stands, however, in striking contrast to the actual history of the problem of crisis within the Marxist tradition. 'In no branch of science does the tradition of thoughtlessness hold greater sway than in political economy' Marx writes. (T.S.V.3 p.) We shall see that this is true not only of bourgeois economy, but also of the political economy of so many epigones of Marx. Initially the significance of the Reproduction Schemas developed in Vol.2 for a theory of crisis was generally scarcely understood. In a review of Vol.2 that appeared in Die Neue Zeit in 1886, Kautsky attempted to explain why in his opinion this volume was of much less interest to the working class than the first one. The working class would be concerned only with the production of surplus-value in the factory. The further question, as to how this surplus value is realised, would concern the capitalists more than the workers. Berhstein would repeat the same judgement, almost in so many words, ten years later, in 1895, on the occasion of the appearance of Volume 3 - in an article surveying the whole of Marx's magnum opus which had now reached completion. Those involved practically in the movement have often read only Volume 1, to the total neglect of Volumes 2 and 3. As late as March 1895 Engels was writing to Victor Adler in Vienna, 'As you want to plough through Volumes 2 and 3 behind the bars, I'll give you a few hints to make it easier.' (Sel. Corr. p.566) Hilferding was thus quite right to refer to the fact that up until the appearance of Tugan Baranowski's book in 1901, the analysis of Volume 2 had been quite 'neglected', and then to add, 'It is Tugan-Baranowski's great merit that he should have demonstrated the importance of these investigations /the Reproduction Schemas/ to the problem of crises in his famous Studien...It is quite remarkable that this demonstration was required in the first place.' (Hilferding, Le Capital Financier, p.339)

With the change that the appearance of Tugan's book brought about, one fell into the opposite error. If previously the relevance of the Reproduction Schemas to the problem of crises had passed unnoticed, now one began to glorify the Schemas in the most enthusiastic manner - as I have shown elsewhere - to ascribe to them an 'objective social existence' and to see in them an exact picture of the capitalist reproduction-process so that directly from the relations of the Reproduction Schema conclusions were drawn regarding processes in capitalism as it actually functions. So Rosa Luxemburg, for example, says, 'We must ask what relevance the Schema of the Reproduction-Process has to reality' (Accumulation of Capital p.104) and answers that the precise proportions of Marx's Schemas compose the 'foundation' not only of capitalist reproduction but of reproduction in every society, including socialist society with its planned economy. In a socialist economy regulated by a plan, production would correspond exactly to the relations of the Schema. 'No such planned organisation of the total process exists in a capitalist economy. Therefore (!HG) things do not run so smoothly, according to a mathematical formula as suggested by the diagram. On the contrary, the course of

reproduction shows continual deviations from the proportions of the diagram.' (op. cit. p.104) 'And yet, apart from all these deviations, the Schema portrays a socially average level in which all these movements must centre, to which they are always striving to return, once they have left it.' (ibid.)

Bauer's position is the same. In his view the Value Schema represents the specific state of equilibrium between capital-accumulation and population around which the real process of reproduction oscillates. Of course, reality manifests constant cyclical deviations from the equilibrium state of the Value Schema, to the extent that the process of production exhibits an over- or under-accumulation in relation to the growth of population. At the same time, however, the bourgeois mode of production comprises a tendency which, even if 'by means of great crises', 'automatically overcomes over-accumulation or the opposite and repeatedly adapts the process of accumulation to the growth of population.' (*Neue Zeit* 1913, p.872). In other words, the real movement strives towards the condition of equilibrium established theoretically and presented in the Value Schema.

In striking opposition to the theory of Marx outlined above, concerning the regulating function of the average profit and of production prices; in opposition to the theory that not values but their converted form of prices of production form the centre of gravity for the fluctuations of market-prices - Rosa Luxemburg and O. Bauer ascribe this function to values. The relationships of the Value Schema are for both of them not simply the first stage in the process of approximation, as they are for Marx, but direct reflections of reality. From this difference of conception regarding the Value Schema - in Marx on the one hand, in Luxemburg and Bauer on the other - further consequences ensue for the analysis of the problem of crisis. The Reproduction Schema developed in Volume 2, together with its values and different profit rates (not equalised for lack of competition) bears no correspondence with reality. Before the Theory of Value can actually clarify the real appearances, and not conflict with them, the values must, in accordance with the theory proposed in Volume 3, be transformed into more concrete prices of production with the help of competition, i.e., a 'large number of links' must be developed that lead to the general rate of profit and eventually to the empirically given forms of profit (interest, groundrent, commercial profit). Insofar as Luxemburg and Bauer ascribe objective validity (*Wirklichkeitsgeltung*) to Marx's methodological and tentative assumption that commodities are sold at their value, and thus treat the Value Schema as a reflection of reality, their way of posing the problem automatically and from the very start excludes the necessity for a transformation of values into prices of production and again into mercantile prices. They abandon the method of progressive concretisation of the relationships described in the Schema, or the method of increasing adequacy of the Reproduction Schema. One has no need to approach reality first by stages in order to grasp it when, according to Luxemburg and Bauer, the Schema is already a reflection of reality!

Thus it is only the logical consequence of this fatal error that as far as Luxemburg and Bauer are concerned, there is no such thing as a value-price transformation problem, no problem of the general rate of profit, or of the conversion of surplus-value into the special forms of profit (commercial profit, interest etc.). As far as they are concerned, the whole theory of Volume 3 is reduced to a non-entity. They remain stuck within the 'germ form' of the Value Schema, at a level of abstraction far removed from reality, without ever embarking on the 'metamorphoses', that is, the path, that leads to an approximation to capitalism as it functions in concrete reality. That as a result of this fatally mistaken conception of Marx's method the inner connection between the value-price transformation problem and the problem of crisis is not grasped, much less investigated, is quite self-evident from our earlier remarks.

In what does this inner connection consist and what is the specific function of calculating in prices? To show this, let us turn to the way Luxemburg presents the whole problem. Through her critical analysis of the Reproduction Schema she arrives at the result that within such a Schema - assuming a difference in organic composition of capital between the two departments - a complete sale of commodities, and thus equilibrium, is not possible because 'with each year...a growing surplus of means of consumption must arise'. (op.cit. ch.25) 'The unsaleable residue of surplus value in Dept. II is only intensified when we take into account increases in the productivity of labour, for...this fact indicates a much larger surplus of unsaleable means of subsistence than is suggested by the amount of this surplus in value terms.' (p.337f.)

Let us suppose that Luxemburg has actually demonstrated this. In which case what has she shown? Only the circumstance that within the value-framework an 'unsaleable residue' appears in Dept. II, i.e., given the assumption that commodities exchange at their value. But we know that this is not an assumption that corresponds with reality. In the Value Schema that underlies Luxemburg's analysis, different rates of profit prevail in the individual departments of production, and for lack of the mechanism of competition they are not equalised into an average rate. This too contradicts reality, where as a result of competition there is a tendency for the different rates of profit to equalise into the general rate of profit. So how convincing are Luxemburg's conclusions when applied to reality, given that these conclusions - her demonstration that an unsaleable surplus of consumer goods arises - are drawn from a schema that has no objective validity whatsoever?

As a result of competition, values become transformed into prices and a redistribution of surplus value between the different branches of industry thus occurs, in consequence of which a change necessarily follows in the earlier established relations of proportionality between the individual spheres of the diagram. It is therefore absolutely possible and likely that a 'surplus of consumer goods' in the Value Schema disappears subsequently in the Price of Production Schema and, conversely, that an original equilibrium in the former becomes subsequently a disproportion in the latter. The defect of any argument that confines itself solely to an analysis of the Value Schema and operates with values and individual rates of profit instead of prices of production and a general rate of profit is quite obvious. Thus Luxemburg herself says, 'Social capital and its counterpart, the total social surplus value, are not merely real magnitudes with an objective existence, but what is more, the relation between them, the average profit, guides and directs the whole process of exchange through the mechanism of the law of value which establishes the quantitative relations of exchange between individual commodities independently of their specific value-relationships.' The average rate of profit is, in other words, the regulative principle due to which 'every capital is in fact treated only as part of a common whole, the total social capital, and assigned the profit to which it is entitled, according to its size, out of the surplus value extorted from society, regardless of the quantity which this particular capital has actually created.' (op.cit. p.79)

According to this argument of Luxemburg's, the whole process of commodity exchange is governed by the average rate of profit. In spite of that, she examines the problem of whether continuous exchange is possible, holding by a schema that knows no average profit. Could one imagine a greater contradiction? If, as Luxemburg states, in concrete reality the exchange-relations of individual commodities proceed 'independently of their specific value-relationships', if each capital realises not the quantum of surplus value created by itself but only the average profit accruing to it in proportion to its size, then indirectly Luxemburg must admit that her theory of realisation is false, that commodities exchange not at their value, but at prices, i.e., production prices, that diverge from values, because, according to Marx, it is only the general rate of profit that brings prices of production

into being. (T.S.V. p.) In fact, in Marx's system, the notion of an equal, average profit is impossible to separate from the notion of production-prices that deviate from values. It is thus a patent logical contradiction when Luxemburg draws no conclusions for the further course of her analysis from her own assertions about the factual character of the average profit and its central regulating role; that she acknowledges the existence of the average rate of profit, of course, but simultaneously holds fast to the assumption that commodities sell at their value! Moreover, the passage cited above is the only one in her work where she refers to the average profit and in a veiled manner to prices of production. But this acknowledgement is nowhere utilised for an understanding of the problem of crisis.

Luxemburg herself had the feeling that the Value Schema is a construction at several removes from reality, when in her 'Anti-Critique' she says about Volume 3 and its relation to the value theory of Volume 1, 'the doctrine of average profit, one of the most important discoveries of Marx's economic theory, is central to its (Volume 3's) argument. This alone gives concrete meaning to the theory of value in the first volume.' ('Anti-Critique', in Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital, p.73)

So she herself asserts that 'concrete meaning' can be ascribed only to 'prices of production' and the average profit, not to the theory of value in Volume 1. But in Accumulation and in the Anti-Critique prices of production are not mentioned once, and she sticks fast to the false assumption that the exchange of commodities between I(v+s) and II(c) at their value is not a purely methodological assumption but a factual process that really unfolds under capitalism! For example, she says that Dept. I's requirements of means of consumption, expressed in I(v+s), is only obtainable from Dept. II's product and thus only in exchange for an equal quantity of value. Even in her last posthumously published work she observes, 'All commodities exchange at their value.' (Einführung in die Nationalökonomie) Luxemburg's totally inconsistent views, the basis for her falling into the worst mistakes of vulgar socialism, are not accidental, however. They stem from her false conception of a prior determination of the function of surplus value, due to the natural form that it assumes, to operate either as means of production in Dept. I or as means of subsistence in Dept. II. To Luxemburg this prior determination of function implies that displacements of surplus value (or of a portion of surplus value) from Dept. II into Dept. I are simply impossible. Such a transfer of surplus value is, according to her, likewise impossible given an equivalence of exchange relations between the two departments.

Thus Luxemburg manages to negate the whole content of Volume 3 and especially of the theory of production-prices and of the formation of an equal rate of profit developed there. Her verbal concession that the doctrine of profit, 'one of the most important discoveries of Marx's theory', is central to Volume 3, cannot conceal the fact that she herself has abandoned the doctrine of average profit. Rather, this abandonment is only underlined by the fact that Luxemburg describes as impossible the only mechanism through which an equal, average profit can be formed. Recall the real state of affairs in Marx's schema of simple reproduction:

I	4000c + 1000v + 1000s = 6000	rate of profit = 20%
II	2000c + 1000v + 1000s = 4000	rate of profit = 33%

We see that if we stick to the Value Schema and its exchange of equivalents, i.e. to the assumption that 1000v + 1000s in Dept. I exchange equivalently for 2000c in Dept. II, then Marx's theory of prices of production goes overboard, and different rates of profit would have to prevail in the two departments. The rate of profit in I amounts to 20%, in II to 33%. How can an equal rate of profit, in this case 25%, form in the two departments of Marx's diagram? It appears almost banal to point out that this is only possible through the formation of prices of production, that is, if the commodities of Dept. I intended for Dept. II are sold above their value, and those of Dept. II destined for Dept. I below their

value. An equal rate of profit can only arise if in return for its 2000 value-units comprised in $v+s$ Dept.I receives a greater amount, namely 2250 value-units from Dept.II. In this way a portion of the surplus value of Dept.II is transferred, in the course of exchange, to Dept.I. Only through this mechanism can Dept.I obtain as against its initial sum of surplus value (1000s), a larger profit (1250s), which calculated on a capital base of 5000C establishes a rate of profit of 25%. In Dept.II, instead of the original surplus value of 1000s, there now remains only 750s, which likewise results in a 25% rate of profit when measured against its capital outlay of 3000C ($C=c+v$).

It is quite clear that the tendency for rates of profit to equalise, or the process by which a portion of the surplus value of Dept.II is transferred to Dept.I, shakes the very foundations of Luxemburg's theory of an 'unsaleable surplus of means of subsistence'. Her 'unshakeable position', as Sternberg calls it, turns out to be a soap-bubble that bursts on the slightest contact with reality. If Luxemburg really wanted to establish her notion of an unsaleable surplus of means of subsistence, then she would have had to carry out this demonstration not simply on the basis of the Value Schema, but further within a Prices of Production Schema. She would have had to show that such an unsaleable residue must result even after the formation of the average rate of profit. But she never provided any such demonstration and did not once even attempt to do so.

The tendency for rates of profit in the different branches of production to equalise is an observation (Beobachtung) confirmed by experience and one which was acknowledged for a whole century by theoreticians of the most diverse scientific schools. Already Ricardo and Malthus understood the tendency in its factual representation. Marx moreover refers to it as an 'empirically given fact' (Cap.3 p.357) or as a 'practical fact' (Cap.3 p.167) 'Observation of competition - the phenomena of production - shows that capitals of equal size yield an equal amount of profit.' (T.S.V.3 p.69) This tendency towards equalisation is not disputed, for competitive capitalism, (für den konkurrenzbedingten Kapitalismus) even by the more recent theoreticians, e.g. Bohm-Bawerk.

The different schools differed only in the particular explanation that each offered. The post-Ricardian school in particular failed to resolve the difficulty posed by the explanation of this fact, because it did not understand how to reconcile the fact of an equal rate of profit with the labour theory of value. Marx's historical achievement lay precisely here. The theory of production prices that diverge from values enabled Marx to explain the fact of an equal rate of profit which, prima facie, contradicts the law of labour value, precisely on the foundations of this law. Insofar as Luxemburg, despite all experience, denied the possibility of a transfer of value from Dept.II to Dept.I and thus the possibility of the formation of prices of production, and insofar as she maintained that commodities exchange at their value, she was quite unable to explain the average rate of profit on the foundations of the labour theory of value itself. Although she sticks rigidly to the theory of value, here in fact she abandons the foundations of Marx's theoretical system. For the assumption that the commodities of the various individual spheres of production are exchanged as equivalents renders the fact of an equal rate of profit impossible to explain. Instead of abandoning the false assumption of 'equivalent exchange' between the departments of the diagram, and thus of the impossibility of transfers of value from II to I, in order to be able to explain the things themselves, Luxemburg would rather sacrifice the latter and hold by the false assumption of 'equivalent exchange'! Thus with one stroke of the pen she does away with the whole of Marx's theory of the equal rate of profit, which according to her own admission forms 'one of the most important discoveries of Marx's economic theory.'

VI Instead of Progress Beyond Marx - Retrogression to Ricardianism

These comments on Luxemburg's understanding of the problem of crisis apply word for word to all Marxists who have tackled the problem of crisis and accumulation. However strange it sounds, it is a fact that in the whole debate that has taken place till now, ever since the appearance of Tugan's book thirty years back, on the possibility of a crisis-free accumulation-process, no one ever posed the true problem, namely, that of establishing crises across all the different stages of approximation. Whether we turn to the neo-harmonists Kautsky, Hilferding and Bauer, or to Luxemburg and her followers, or finally to Bukharin and the Communist theoreticians, they have all tackled the question only at its threshold, by means of a value schema which knows only values, surplus values and different rates of profit, instead of pursuing their analysis and results on the more advanced basis of a prices of production schema in which prices of production, competition and the general rate of profit form the regulative categories. Regardless of whether you support the position that crises are necessary and inevitable under capitalism or whether you agree with the neo-harmonist tendency in believing that a crisis-free accumulation is possible, it is clear that conclusions established one way or the other solely on the basis of a value schema are premature and scarcely convincing. For how could an analysis within a value-framework tell us anything at all about the conditions of proportionality that may or may not regulate the exchange-process of a capitalist economy when the proportionality-conditions established with so much trouble in the value schema are later inevitably upset by the tendency for rates of profit to equalise and by the associated redistribution of surplus value! None of the writers mentioned above even acknowledged or referred to the significance and relevance to crisis-theory of the transformation of values into prices, much less dealt with them.

Following Ricardo and Malthus, bourgeois economy had seen the 'practical fact' of the equality of profit rates. But neither the classical nor the post-Ricardian school knew how to reconcile this fact with the theory of value and ended up in a theoretical blind alley insofar as they were compelled either to abandon the theory in favour of the fact or the fact in favour of the theory. The post-Ricardian school was ship-wrecked for ever on this contradiction between fact and theory, on its inability to deduce the general rate of profit from the abstract labour theory of value, and Marx was thus correct to identify as the cause of its dissolution the problem of 'the formation of the general rate of profit...Failure to understand the relation of value to price of production.' (T.S.V.3 p.237) In particular he reproaches Ricardo with simply having 'presupposed' the general rate of profit, in conformity with reality, without seeking 'to examine how far its existence is in fact consistent with the determination of value by labour-time', for 'prima facie it contradicts it, and its existence would therefore have to be developed through a number of intermediary stages.' (T.S.V. p.174) For this reason Marx underlines the 'scientific inadequacy' of Ricardo's method which leads him to 'erroneous results'. This consists in the fact that Ricardo 'begins with the determination of the magnitude of value by labour-time' and then asks whether the remaining economic relations correspond to or contradict values. The inadequacy of this method consists likewise in the fact 'that it omits some essential links and directly seeks to prove the congruity of the economic categories with one another'. (T.S.V.2 p.164-5)

Insofar as Marx reconstructed these 'links' and through his theory of the formation of the general rate of profit and of the transformation of values into prices of production or mercantile prices brought the labour theory of value into harmony with the facts themselves, he developed economic theory beyond the point at which the post-Ricardian school had itself foundered.